

LETTERS

RELATIVE TO

THE RIGHTS

AND

PRESENT POSITION

OF

THE QUEBEC MINORITY

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IV.

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H

A

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ANSWER
OF THE
HON. HONORÉ MERCIER
TO THE PAMPHLET OF
THE EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION
*Against the majority of the inhabitants of the
Province of Quebec*

THIS PAMPHLET CONTAINS :

- 1stly The correspondence exchanged between the Hon. Mr Mercier and the Revd Mr Caven, President of the Equal Rights Association ;
2ndly Letter having as its title: " Disabilities of Protestants in the Province of Quebec," by Mr Sellar, editor of the *Huntingdon Gleaner* ;
3rdly Answer to this letter, by the Hon. Mr Mercier, Prime Minister of the Province of Quebec.
-

QUEBEC

1890



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CORRESPONDENCE

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER,
Province of Quebec.

Quebec, February 28th, 1890.

Reverend Sir,

I have before me a copy of a pamphlet entitled :
" *Equal Rights Association for the Province of Ontario. Important letter by a resident of Quebec as to the disabilities of Protestants in that Province.* This letter is dated 1st December, 1889 and signed : " A QUEBEC LOYALIST."

This pamphlet contains the following notice :

" EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

" Important letter of a resident of the Province of Quebec, on *The Disabilities of Protestants in that Province.*

" *EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO*

" 9½ ADELAIDE STREET EAST,

" Toronto, 21st December, 1889.

" The accompanying letter, written by a well known English resident of the Province of Quebec, to member of the committee is submitted by the Exe-

cutive Committee of the Association, for the earnest consideration of the people of the Dominion.

E. D. ARMOUR,

" Hon. Secretary.

" W. A. CAVEN,

" President."

As the assertions contained in this letter are false and unjust to the majority of this Province and as this pamphlet has been greatly circulated amongst the Protestant community, I think it is my duty to ask you if you would be kind enough to give me the name of the " QUEBEC LOYALIST ", who has written this letter.

I write to you officially and you will be kind enough to answer me so.

I have the honor to be

Yours truly,

HONORÉ MERCIER.

Premier.

Rev. W. CAVEN,

Chairman,

Equal Rights Association,

91 Adelaide Street East,

Toronto. Ont.

EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO.

Office: 9½ Adelaide Street East.

Toronto, Ont, March 7th 1890.

Honorable sir.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from you in which you ask for the name of a "QUEBEC LOYALIST", who has written a pamphlet on *The Disabilities of Protestants in the Province of Quebec.*

I have not the writer's permission to disclose his name, but I shall forward to him a copy of your letter and await his reply.

Permit me to say that the Equal Rights Association would much regret to endorse any statement which is not strictly correct, and if it be shown to them that "the assertions contained in this letter are false and unjust to the majority in Quebec," they will hasten to disclaim any responsibility implied in their relation to this pamphlet.

I have the honor to be

Your obedient servant,

WM. CAVEN.

The Hon. HONORÉ MERCIER,

Premier of Quebec.

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER,
Province of Quebec,
Quebec, 10th March, 1890.

SIR,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 7th instant concerning the letter of a "QUEBEC LOYALIST." I shall wait till I receive a further communication in connection with my demand before I answer] the other part of your letter.

With due respect,

Yours truly,

HONORÉ MERCIER.

Revd. WM. CAVEN,
9½ Adelaide street East,
Toronto, Ont.

EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO,
Office, 9½ Adelaide East,
Toronto, Ont., 10th March, 1890.

Honorable Sir,

In replying to your communication of the 28th ult., respecting the authorship of a pamphlet entitled "*Disabilities of Protestants in the Province of Quebec*," I stated that I should forward to the writer of said pamphlet a copy of your letter to me, and await his reply.

To-day I received from the gentleman referred to a telegram of which the following is a copy:—
"Send my name to Mercier and demand that he
"proves his statement about my letter."

The writer is Mr. Robert Sellar, editor of the *Huntingdon Gleaner*, Huntingdon, Que.

Having given his name, you will doubtless recognise at once Mr. Sellar's title to make the above demand."

I have the honor to be

Your obdt. servant,

WM. CAVEN.

The Hon. HONORÉ MERCIER,

Province of Quebec.

Premier.

EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

Important letter by a resident of Quebec as to
"The Disabilities of Protestants in that Province."

EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO.

9½ ADELAIDE STREET EAST,
TORONTO, 21st December, 1889.

The accompanying letter, written by a well-known English resident of the Province of Quebec to a member of the Committee, is submitted by the Executive Committee of the Association for the earnest consideration of the people of the Dominion.

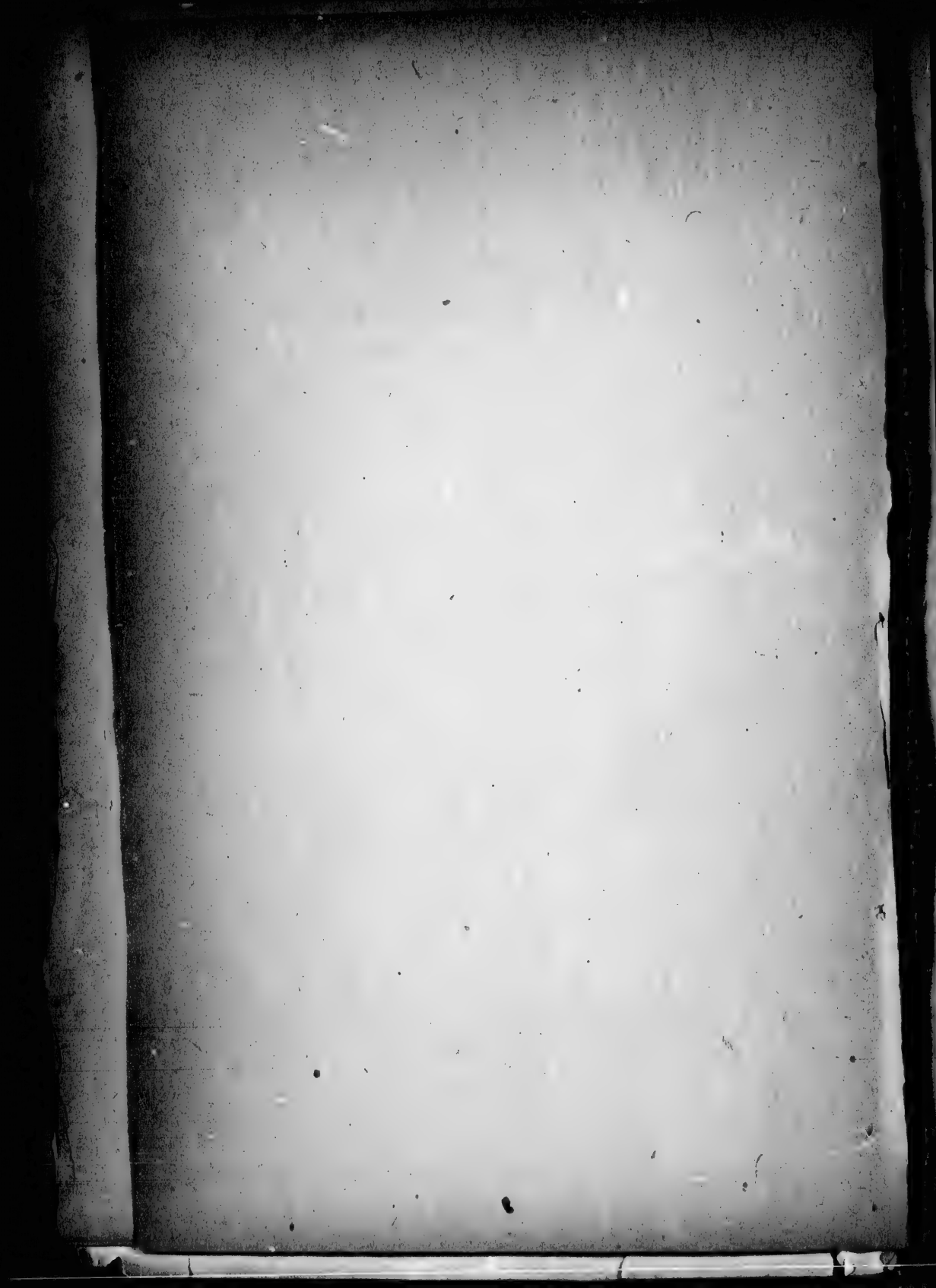
E. D. ARMOUR,
Hon. Secretary.

W. CAVEN,
President.

Published by
THE EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION,
9½ Adelaide Street East,
Toronto.

Copies of this letter and other literature of the Association may be obtained on application to W. Banks, Secretary, at the above address.

TORONTO
MAIL JOB PRINT
1890.



THE
Disabilities of Protestants
IN THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

THE PARISH SYSTEM.

SIR.—I have your letter before me asking for a statement of the disabilities Protestants labor under in the Province of Quebec. I answer gladly, for I wish that every elector in the Dominion should know the state of matters here, being confident that if he did he would use his influence to have it changed.

The subject will be treated from the standpoint of the Protestant farmer, and it is his disabilities I shall describe, the position of the Protestants in the towns and cities being somewhat different. To grasp the grievances of the Protestant farmer you need to understand the character of the church of Rome as it is developed in the Province of Quebec, and also the parish system.

In the Province of Ontario that church is almost everywhere in a minority, and its policy is shaped to suit its surroundings, while the views

of its members and clergy are insensibly modified by the reflected light of the communities that surround them. Its clergy are far from rich and are dependent upon the voluntary contributions of their people, which, in itself is, a powerful modifying influence upon their character and aspirations. As a rule you know them as you know Protestant ministers, as men who devote themselves to the spiritual affairs of those with whom they are concerned. In Québec it is entirely different. The Church of Rome is a compact organization, in which each priest and congregation have any distinctive features blotted out, and are simply cogs in a great machine which compels them to move in a fixed way. In one sense it is a Church, in another it is a government, having the province divided into sections and controlled by its deputies, yet a government irresponsible to crown or people, claiming an authority above and beyond that of the state. Her influence is felt in every sphere and walk of daily life, and she shadows every interest. Did you live here, you would see how absolutely she is mistress of the province, how everything is made subservient to her, and with what complacency she assumes that the people exist for her and not she for the people. I doubt if elsewhere you will find the Ultramontane idea as highly developed, the Church regnant, the people and government at her feet. Her wealth is commensurate with her power. She is the largest real estate owner on the continent, and her

lands are placed outside the jurisdiction of the laws governing real estate, for they are locked up under mortmain, and on her property she pays no tax. One would need to travel from city to city and town to town for a month, before one would have an adequate conception of the wealth of this Church. Her servants are in proportion. Counting ministers of all denominations, I do not suppose you would find in Ontario many over 3,000. Quebec has a third less population, yet nearly 8,000 men and women have taken the perpetual vow of obedience to the Church of Rome. Add to these the lay servants and dependents, and there must be twenty thousand whose daily bread comes from this gigantic organization. Now, its wealth and overmastering influence are largely due to

THE PARISH SYSTEM.

When the King of France took possession of Canada, he did not give or sell its lands to those who wished to cultivate them; he would have no dealings with the man who wished to clear the land and plow it. He wanted to give to Canada a nobility, and with that object in view divided up the country that faces the St. Lawrence into large blocks, each one containing several square miles, and presented them to his favorites. These grants of land were called *seigniories*, and the gentlemen to whom they were given *seigniors*.

or lords, and they encouraged settlers to go upon their estates, not selling them lots, but giving them perpetual possession on paying a small fixed rent and certain other dues. These *seigniories* were divided into parishes, and over each parish a priest was placed. Had the system stopped here all would have been well. Unfortunately the French king, instead of leaving the support of the priests to the voluntary contributions of their flocks, ordained that the twenty-sixth bushel of all grain raised be given to them, and that a tax be levied on all farm lands for the building and upholding of church and parsonage. The seigniorial system was broken up over thirty years ago, and now only a few fragments remain; the parish system is untouched, and in a more highly developed and efficient state than in the days when a Louis was king of Canada. Let me sketch it to you as it exists to-day.

The priest is the convener and chairman of all parish meetings and without his sanction nothing can be done by the people. Does he consider a new church to be necessary? He obtains the consent of a majority of his people and that of his bishop, and forthwith a tax is imposed upon all the farm lands in proportion to their value, the ordinary municipal assessment roll being generally used, payable in equal instalments spread over not less than three or more than eight years. Of late the priests have vied with one another in zeal for building churches, and nume-

rous substantial and sightly buildings have been abandoned and replaced by splendid structures, often beyond the needs of the parish. There have been hundreds of churches built or re-modelled within the past twenty years that have cost from twenty to thirty thousand dollars; not a few of them from thirty to seventy-five thousand. There are parishes where the church has cost as much money as the dwellings of the farmers who worship within its walls would sell for. This building tax is so heavy, that I do not suppose one is levied that is not the cause of some of the habitants losing their farms. To pay the tax they have to borrow and the mortgage eats up their places and they drift to the cities or the United States. Where very costly churches are raised, such pitiful cases are numerous. Generally the priest's house is in keeping with the church, and is built and maintained by a like tax levied on the lands of the parish. His living is also derived in part directly from the land. Out of every twenty-six bushels of grain (peas are included) the farmer raises, he must give one to the priest, delivering it, clean, merchantable grain, at the parsonage before Easter in each year. It is one of the fictions entertained by many outside Quebec, who form their estimate of the character of the habitant from reading "Evangeline," that this tribute is paid gladly. If there is a man in the Dominion who has an adequate sense of the value of a dollar, it is the habitant. The tithe is paid

with a grudge, and were it not for the information obtained from neighbors and the threshing-mill men, the priest would come short. I know of one parish where such inferior grain was drawn, that the priest referred to it in his sermon, and asked his hearers, as they passed out, to examine at the door a specimen of the oats a certain farmer had delivered. At the rebellion of 1837 the habitants were stimulated to take part in it, because one of the reforms promised was the abolition of tithes. A misconception to be avoided is, that the tithes represent all that the habitant contributes to the support of his clergyman. In truth, the payment of the tithe and building tax entitles him to very little—to standing room in the church he helped to build and to a grave in the cemetery. As one poor man expressed it, he had to stand during grand mass “like a brute beast.” To secure a pew, he has to pay a yearly rental, and for all the rites and services of church and priest he has to pay. The tithe is, in fact, an addition to the ordinary revenue of the clergy, a supplement he now enjoys nowhere else outside of Quebec.

Were the payment of tithes and building tax the result of a mutual agreement among the members of the Church of Rome in Quebec, were they in any sense voluntary contributions, the people of the Dominion would have no right to interfere with them, but when you learn that they are levied and collected by virtue of statutes passed by the Legislature, and voted for by many

Upper Canada members, you will perceive that yourself and every other elector are parties to them and accountable for their maintenance. There is not a circuit court in the province whose power has not been called upon by the Church of Rome to compel payment of these assessments. I was once present in a court, of which the judge and all the officials were Protestants, when a number of Irish Catholic farmers were sued by the priest for tithes, and when judgment was rendered in his favor, I thought 'an outrage had been perpetrated, and that instead of the British coat of arms looking down on those assembled, the insignia of the Vatican would have been more appropriate. Bear this well in mind, that the habitants pay the taxes in question to their church,

BECAUSE THE WHIP OF BRITISH LAW
COMPELS THEM.

We have no business to interfere with the Church of Rome in what demands it may make of its followers, or what assessments it may levy upon them, but as British subjects we have a right to say whether or not the courts of the Empire are to assist in maintaining those demands and in becoming collectors of those assessments. It is this backing given by the State to which the peculiar development of that Church in Quebec is due. Having the State as its servant in

coercing its people, it assumes the attributes of supremacy, while its sources of income being largely independent of the will of those to whom it ministers, it disregards their wishes and rules autocratically. To sum up in one sentence, it is the union of Church and State in Quebec that menaces the peace of the Dominion.

HOW THE PARISH SYSTEM AFFECTS PROTESTANTS.

No land owned by a Protestant is liable to parish assessments, they are collected solely from Roman Catholics, who may be so only in name and who may not attend church, all the same they must pay tithes, and any building tax that may be levied. Their sole way of escape is to notify the priest that they have left the Church of Rome, and no habitant need do that unless prepared to leave the province. I have seen this provision of the law, that Protestants are exempt, quoted by Ontario newspapers as conclusive proof that they have no cause to complain of the parish system. Were those who express such an opinion to come to Quebec and make personal investigation, they would perceive their error. Let me give you an illustration from actual life.

Fifty years ago a number of emigrants from the British Isles formed a settlement in the wild lands of this province. They prospered and increased for twenty years, when the Roman Catholic

bishop issued his decree including their settlement in a canonical parish he had erected. The Roman Catholics were mainly taborers employed by the Protestants, several of whom contributed towards erecting a temporary church, which was followed by a convent-school, established by one of the great Montreal nunneries, partly to attract a Catholic population, and partly to catch a few Protestant girls as pupils. When from death or other vicissitude a farm owned by Protestants was offered for sale, the priest had a purchaser, who, if he had not sufficient money, got a loan from the city ecclesiastical corporations at a low rate of interest. A French store-keeper was brought in, a French doctor and finally a notary. Then the colonization societies lent their aid, and the funds of these societies are supplemented by the government. The work went on slowly, but it went on steadily. If I were asked to name the most remarkable feature in the Church of Rome, I would answer, its deliberate movements, its unalterable purpose combined with patience. Nothing is done openly, nothing rashly, nothing violently. The tide is creeping upward and remorselessly swallowing everything in its way, but on the placid face of the waters there is not an eddy nor a ripple to indicate the resistless power that is impelling them. Farm by farm dropped into Catholic hands, and the area of lands liable to tax and tithe went on extending. In course of time the Protestants became so few that they found it

difficult to maintain schools, and were it not for aid from outside, they could not have retained a minister. Their farms were fertile, and, materially, they were doing better than they could elsewhere, so that so far as dollars and cents are concerned they had no cause to move, yet when they considered that their children were growing up imperfectly educated, and that their neighbors were of different speech and creed, they were impelled to make a sacrifice and leave. Their farms were bought, and what was twenty-five years before an English-speaking settlement has become a French one, and from land that did not yield dollar to the Church of Rome, she now levies contributions that yield thousands.

This is the history of scores of outlying settlements of Protestants in this province, and that they were extinguished by set purpose is not concealed. Say a Quebec paper the other day: "We have not in vain absorbed many of the English and Scotch settlements planted among us to break up our homogeneity." So long as it is law that the land of the Province of Quebec shall yield tribute to the Church of Rome when owned by its adherents, that Church will work unceasingly to dispossess Protestants, for every acre it wins enhances alike its income and its prestige.

You may here ask, whether Protestants who took up land in Quebec did not do so with their eyes open, and knowing that it was subject to the parish system, have they a right to now complain?

No such plea can be urged. When the townships were settled they were not only free from the parish system, but there was an Imperial guarantee that they should never be subject to it.

THE EXTENSION OF THE PARISH SYSTEM TO THE
TOWNSHIPS IS A VIOLATION OF A PLEDGE
AND A USURPATION.

I will set the facts before you and you will judge for yourself. When Canada passed into the hands of the British, Quebec bore no resemblance to the Quebec of to-day. It consisted of thinly-peopled settlements, which occupied narrow strips bordering the St. Lawrence. A few miles back of the great river rose the bush, and the primeval wilderness extended on the north shore to the Arctic Circle, and on the south to the United States. Bear this in mind, that when General Murray set about constituting Quebec a British colony, it had only seventy thousand inhabitants, who lived in the narrow ribbon of clearances that edged the St. Lawrence; that was all they occupied and that was all they claimed. The British commander was asked to leave the parish system to this handful of people; he refused, English law was established among them, and for thirteen years no habitant was compelled to pay either tithe or tax. That state of affairs would have continued until our own day had it not been for the breaking out of the American Revolution.

The Imperial authorities were afraid the French people might join in it, and to avert that danger they bribed their priests by giving them back the power to levy their dues. This was done in 1774 by the Quebec Act, which, however, confined the privilege strictly to the *seigniories*, or, more correctly speaking, to the eighty-two parishes then in existence, coupling, however, the gift with the proviso that the priests were to become subject to the conditions of the sovereign's supremacy as laid down in the Act of 1 Elizabeth. As if foreseeing what has actually happened, that the priests would apply the privilege so granted to the entire province, this clause was added :

" Provided always that nothing in this Act
 " contained shall extend, or be construed to extend,
 " to any lands that have been granted by His
 " Majesty, or shall hereafter be granted by His
 " Majesty, his heirs and successors, to be holden
 " in free and common socage."

Surely this is plain enough. The parish system was restored to the *seigniory* or fief land ; all land granted by the crown in free and common socage was to be clear of it. The Imperial Parliament and George III. restored French law and usages to the thin chain of French settlements, and to them only ; all the rest of the province was to continue as before, under English law. Every French Catholic writer and every French Catholic speaker on this subject invariably ignores the clause I have quoted, and speaks of the Quebec

Act as restoring French law and custom to the entire province and dare anybody to interfere with the Imperial concession. Nothing could be more dishonest. The Quebec Act merely restored French law and usage to the *seigniories*, not a twentieth part of the province as now constituted, and to them only does it apply. All outside of that restricted strip of land was to be settled and governed like Ontario, Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick, namely, under English law. This was perfectly understood and acted upon by successive Governors. The crown lands of Quebec were surveyed and divided, not into *seigniories* and *parishes*, but into counties and townships. In these townships English law prevailed, French law had no standing, and the priests had no more authority to tithe and tax in them than they have in Ontario. The result was that these townships became settled by English-speaking people, who would not have felled a tree in them had they known they would ever have been brought under the parish system. The pledge that English law would always rule where the land was granted in free and common socage was renewed in 1826, when the Imperial Parliament, in the Canada Tenure Act, declared that the law of England was the rule by which real property in the townships was to be regulated and administered. The two settlements thus grew side by side: one English-speaking, with English law and usages, prosperous and expansive; the other French, with French

law and customs, poor and stagnant. The rapid growth of what may be termed English Quebec excited the fears and jealousy of the Anglophobes preceding the rebellion and they endeavored to check it by adverse legislation. But despite all obstacles, English Quebec grew in wealth and population, progressing at such a rate that, at the date of the union with Upper Canada, it threatened in time to outstrip French Quebec. In those days the *seigniories* were overpopulated: if the season was unfavorable there was distress, and applications to the Legislature for public aid were frequent. Papineau urged his countrymen to go into the townships and take up land; few did so, and the reason, given to the repeated parliamentary committees on the subject was, that the priests were adverse to their leaving the *seigniories*, because the parish system was not in force in the townships. The rebellion was designed to destroy the townships: they survived it to fall before an instrument that was being silently forged by the hierarchy. The union of Upper and Lower Canada took place, and among the first acts of the new Legislature was one providing for the erection of canonical parishes. As it stood alone it was of slight consequence, but, at long intervals, its provisions were amended and extended by subsequent Acts, all of which disregarded the restriction of the Quebec Act and applied their provisions to the entire province. This was done so gradually and unobtrusively that these little bills

were introduced and passed without attracting notice. Not one of them said, "the parish system is hereby extended to the townships." That would have excited alarm and ensured their doom. They simply professed to be amendments of previous Acts, their sting lying in the unthought of preambles, which made the provisions of these previous Acts applicable to the entire province of Lower Canada. When the last and worst of these little bills was before the Legislature, Cartier explained that it only affected Catholics and was designed to legalize certain arrangements between the bishops and their people. The power thus obtained to extend the parish system into the townships was cautiously used and the approaches were exceedingly slow. Here and there a parish was formed where the Catholics were most numerous, and the objection of the priesthood being removed to their people taking up land in the townships, they were now as eager in urging them to go as they were before in restraining them, and, when Confederation came, the Legislature seconded their efforts by grants to colonization societies and departmental favors. At the present hour the townships are overspread by a network of parishes, and in each of them the priests collect tithes and church taxes are levied off land which the Imperial Government guaranteed should be forever free from such imposts. Indeed, it is not necessary to quote statutes in support of the claim of the townships.

to freedom from the parish system, for the deed granted by the sovereign to each settler bears proof of the fact. Up to Confederation the patents issued by the Crown Lands Department for lands granted under them contained these words :

“ To have and hold in like manner as lands
“ are holden in free and common soccage in that
“ part of Great Britain called England.”

Queen Victoria thus issued her letters patent for a lot of land, declaring that the yeomen to whom she granted it shall hold it free from all lien, and the same as if it were situated in England. And in full faith of that assurance, the settler went on and spent the vigor of his manhood in clearing that lot. In his old age a priest comes and says, “ Your land was granted to you
“ by the Queen, subject to a servitude held by my
“ Church, a perpetual claim, a mortgage that cannot be wiped out, as its payment is conditional
“ upon the creed of the occupant. You being a
“ Protestant, I will do what I can to get you off it
“ and a Catholic put in your place, so that Holy
“ Church may enter into the full enjoyment of her
“ patrimony.”

Such, sir, is the manner in which the parish system has been extended to the townships, and need I add, that its introduction has caused their decadence. Numerous settlements have been wiped out and everywhere the French increase, so that the English who could control twenty constituencies twenty-five years ago are outnumbered

in all but four. It is for the electors of the Dominion to answer the question,

SHALL THE REMNANT BE WIPED OUT?

If the existing law is continued, a law offering a substantial inducement to each priest to drive the Protestant farmers out, it is as certain as that the St. Lawrence rolls to the sea, that before the coming century is far advanced few will be left. Is the union of Church and State to be continued in the Province of Quebec? Is the priesthood to continue to have behind it British courts to enforce the collection of tithe and tax? Is the Church of Rome to sit in this province enthroned as a queen, panoplied with exclusive privileges, and with her foot on the neck of its Legislature? If so, then over one hundred thousand loyal British subjects will leave the lands they and their fathers redeemed from the bush and follow their brethren who have gone before them. As it is in *your* power, and in the power of every elector of the Dominion to continue or abolish this system, so upon *you* and them, jointly with the priests, will rest the accountability for one of the greatest outrages ever wrought on English-speaking people, for outrage and crime it surely is, to maintain a law that offers a bonus to the clergy of the Church of Rome to dispossess men and women of their homes on account of their creed and nationality.

There are other disabilities under which the

non-Catholic people of Quebec labor, and these I may give in another letter. The parish system is so pre-eminent among the grievances of which we complain, that I think it better not to place it on the same parallel with the others.

A QUEBEC LOYALIST.

December 1, 1889.



ANSWER

OF THE

HONORABLE HONORÉ MERCIER

TO THE PAMPHLET PUBLISHED BY

THE EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

Against the majority of the inhabitants of the
Province of Quebec

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the tenth of March instant, informing me that the author of the pamphlet signed: A QUEBEC LOYALIST is Mr Robert Sellar, editor of the newspaper called "*The Huntingdon Gleaner*." Owing to press of business and the importance of parliamentary work, I have been compelled to delay my answer.

Allow me to confess in all frankness that it does not surprise me to hear that Mr Sellar is this so-called QUEBEC LOYALIST: this gentleman is a rabid fanatic, who never misses an opportunity to show his hatred against everything which is French and Catholic, without the slightest respect, which every honest and impartial man

owes to the truth. The small sheet which he publishes is not sufficient for his insatiable desire to represent under false colors everything that is dear to the majority of the population of the Province in which he lives, and he has hastened to send you his letter, delighted to avail himself of the influence and means of publication of your association in order to spread more widely falsehood and calumny concerning my fellow-countrymen, their clergy and their religious institutions.

If the editor of the *Gleaner* alone were in question, I would not take the trouble to notice him, for the very good reason that in our Province he is too well known to be able to injure any one, and that here his elucubrations are too well appreciated at their true value by respectable Protestants and by Catholics to deserve the honor of refutation. But as the Equal Rights Association, of which you are the president, has assumed the responsibility of the writing which is the object of this correspondence, that fact gives to it an importance which imposes upon me the duty of refuting it and of showing to the impartial public that the letter in question is nothing but a tissue of errors as to facts, history and appreciation. If, after this refutation has been placed before your association, it does not repudiate the letter of Mr. Sellar and persists in spreading it abroad, honorable people will be able to judge of the ways and means employed by you to rouse the Protestant population of the other provinces against the

eleven hundred thousand Catholics who inhabit the Province of Quebec and who desire nothing more than to live at peace with their fellow-citizens of other races and creeds. If the Executive Committee of the Equal Rights Association be animated by anything like sentiments of justice and respect for truth, it should consider it a duty to publish the refutation which I now make, in order to repair the injustice it has committed in publishing the pamphlet which has called forth this refutation.

You say in your letter of the seventh of March "that the Equal Rights Association would much regret to endorse any statement which is not strictly correct, and should it be shown to them that the assertions contained in this letter are false and injurious to the majority in Quebec, they will hasten to disclaim any responsibility implied in their relation to this pamphlet."

I accept this declaration, or rather this engagement, and I forward you with this letter a demonstration which will put you under the obligation of fulfilling it.

I have the honor to be

Your humble servant,

(Signed)

HONORÉ MERCIER.

PREMIER-MINISTRE.

To the Revd. WM. CAVEN,
President of the
Equal Rights Association,
Toronto, Ont.

ANSWER OF THE HON. MR. MERCIER
*to the pamphlet of the Equal Rights Association against
 the majority of the inhabitants of the
 Province of Quebec.*

It would require a large volume to refute in succession the errors and misrepresentations forming Mr Sellar's pamphlet. The public could not have the patience to read a work of such a nature and I have not the leisure to undertake such a work. Leaving aside all useless and idle details, I take the substance of the pamphlet; this can be summarized in the following points:

Firstly. The so-called domination and wealth of the Catholic Church in the Province of Quebec;

Secondly. The parish system and its so-called injustice to Protestants;

Thirdly. Tithes — that English courts are degraded by being called upon to enforce their collection; -

Fourthly. That the introduction of the parish system in parts of the Province situated outside of the seigniories is a violation of a formal engagement and a usurpation.

As it happens with all men who give up to fanaticism the control of their conscience and reason, the editor of the *Gleaner* is not distinguished by order or method; his pamphlet is only a confused mass, without any regular order in its ideas; but by analysing it a little, the reader will find that it is only a repetition of the four propositions above enumerated. I will follow this order in the refutation that I am going to make.

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I.

THE SO-CALLED DOMINATION AND WEALTH OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

Speaking of the Catholic Church as it exists in the Province of Quebec, the author of the pamphlet says :

" In one sense it is a church, in another it is " a government, having the Province divided " into sections and controlled by its deputies, " yet a government irresponsible to crown or " people, claiming an authority above and beyond " that of the State."

Taken in the general sense given by the author, the assertion is false. With respect to worship, Catholics are divided into groups known under the name of *parishes* as Protestants are known under the name of *congregations* ; but these divisions have only a religious character, and are not controlled by deputies, as falsely asserted by the editor of the *Gleaner*.

What harm can there be, would I ask, in thus grouping Catholics for purposes of worship ? Does not this grouping likewise exist among Protestants, in our Province as well as in all the other parts of the Dominion ? Is there any reasonable man who can seriously see harm in it ? It is only the delirious fanaticism of Mr. Sellar which

objects of a state of things so natural, so necessary to public order.

Now to say that this "government is irresponsible to crown or people, claiming an authority above and beyond that of the State," is to state a thing true in itself, but false in the sense that Mr. Sellar gives to his assertion, which is general and without restriction. Catholic doctrine teaches, that in purely spiritual matters, religious authority is of an order superior to that of the civil authority, but that in temporal matters civil authority or the authority of the State transcends all others. That is to say, that according to Catholic doctrine, the preponderance of authority is derived from the preponderance of the end at which such authority aims; and as spiritual ends are superior to temporal ends, the authority which provides for the former is, in its nature and in the strict limits of its ends, of an order superior to that which provides for temporal ends.

You are a minister of the Gospel, Mr. Caven, and you thoroughly understand protestant theology. I would now ask you: Is not Catholic doctrine, such as I have just exposed it, the doctrine of all christian religions? Is it not simply the application of these words of the Gospel: 'Render unto God that which belongs to God and to Cesar that which belongs to Cesar?'

In order that there be no misunderstanding about this part of Catholic doctrine, I will cite a

few extracts from the work of Mgr. Cavagnis, published at Rome in 1887, with the approbation of the highest Catholic authorities. These are the citations :

" It is said : If the Church were sovereign, " there would be a State within a State ; in other " words, in the same territory, there would be " two sovereignties and the same men would form " two perfect and independent societies. But this " cannot be, as the co-existence of two sovereigns, " having jurisdiction on the same territory and " over the same persons, is repugnant. The power " of the one would necessarily limit that of the " other, and neither would be sovereign in the " full meaning of the term.....Sovereignty there- " fore repels not only all superior jurisdiction but " also all equal jurisdiction.

" To this objection an answer is easily made " by distinguishing how two sovereignties may " be in opposition in the same territory and over " the same persons. When two sovereignties are " of the same kind, have the same immediate end, " the same object and the same subject-matter " on which they exercise their power, then we " meet with the inconveniences above mentioned ; " one imposes limits upon the other ; neither one " nor the other is truly sovereign, and the same " subjects would have to serve equally two " masters.

" But it is not thus, when it is a question of " two sovereignties, whose order, object, end and

" subject-matter are distinct and different. In
 " that case, the one imposes no limits upon the
 " other in the sphere which belongs to it. In
 " consequence there is not in the State another
 " State of the same kind, but another State of a
 " different kind. In this there can be nothing
 " repugnant, for the reason that all created things
 " are limited to one order and one kind. The
 " sovereignty of the State is limited to the tem-
 " poral order, that of the Church to the spiritual
 " order. To God alone belongs absolute and uni-
 " versal sovereignty.....

" If the Church has many rights over the
 " State, because it is a society of a sovereign order,
 " it has no less duties to perform towards the
 " State. And above all there is the duty as a mat-
 " ter of justice not to encroach upon the province
 " of the State. *All that which is purely temporal*
 " *belongs to the State* The Church therefore cannot
 " under any proper claim meddle with matters
 " purely temporal. It should render unto Cæsar
 " that which belongs to Cæsar, and to God that
 " which belongs to God.

" In questions which in nowise concern reli-
 " gion and which are simply economical, political,
 " civil or military, Catholics form neither a body
 " nor a party, but each can follow the party which
 " appears the best to him." (1)

These are the principles which govern the
 Catholic clergy, in this Province as well as in

(1) *Notions de Droit Public, Naturel et Ecclésiastique, par Mgr Cavagnès, p. 338 et seq.*

other parts of the world. Where can there be found in all this "the authority superior to that of the State" mentioned by Mr. Sellar? This so-called domination of the Catholic clergy exists only in the too vivid imagination of the *Gleaner* writer. I defy him to bring forward facts or writings to establish it.

No; outside of purely religious matters, the Catholic Church does not claim an authority superior to that of the State; on the contrary, one of the fundamental principles of its doctrine is its submission to civil authority. It is surprising that Mr. Sellar, who lives among Catholics and pretends to know them, should not yet know this. If he would only give himself the trouble to go over the debates on the Catholic Emancipation Bill, he would find that, nearly a hundred years ago, a distinguished Protestant bishop, Dr. Horsley, (English Parliamentary History, Vol. 29, page 670) declared in the House of Lords that "the Roman Catholics better understand than the thing seems to be understood by many of these who call themselves our Protestants brethren, in what plain characters the injunction of the unreserved submission of the individual to the government under which he is born is written in the divine law of the Gospel."

I need not add that in asserting that the

Catholic Church "assumes that the people exists for her and not she for the people," Mr. Sellar is guilty of an untruth which does not deserve the honor of being refuted. I defy him to corroborate this altogether gratuitous assertion by facts or writings.

Mr. Sellar asserts that the Catholic Church of the Province of Quebec "is the greatest real estate owner on the continent." This is simply a falsehood which must be apparent to the most limited vision. As a Church the Church of Rome does not own one inch of land in the Province of Quebec. I defy Mr. Sellar to prove the contrary.

According to our law, real estate destined for Catholic worship does not belong to the Church but to the parishioners, and the extent of real estate destined for that object is very limited. On the first point, the following is what is stated by Judge Beaudry :

"Parishioners are obliged to contribute to the purchase of land required for the buildings *They are its proprietors.*" (1)

As to the extent of the land, it is fixed in the following manner by article 3450 of our Revised Statutes:

"The quantity of land so acquired for the purposes aforesaid, within the walls of the cities of Quebec and Montreal, respectively, shall not, in the whole, exceed one arpentand outside of the walls, but within the limits of the said

(1) *Code des curés, marguilliers et paroissiens*, page 58.

"cities, shall not exceed eight arpents in superficies; and the quantity of land so held in any other place for the use of each parish, mission, congregation or religious society, shall not exceed two hundred English acres."

There are not one thousand Catholic parishes or missions in the Province of Quebec, and I assert without fear that the extent of the land possessed by such parishes and missions does not exceed in the whole 20,000 acres.

Is the Equal Rights Association prepared to assert with its fellow-laborer Sellar, that there are not to be found in all America proprietors owing a greater extent of land or a greater real estate owner?

Without going to foreign countries, compare these 20,000 acres with the extent of the monopolies which the Ottawa Government has established in the North-West? Without speaking of the colonization societies, is it not known that the grants made to the Bell Farm Company exceed 50,000 acres?

"Her lands, continues Mr. Sellar, are placed outside the jurisdiction of the laws governing real estate, for they are locked up under mortmain, and on her property she pays no taxes."

Wrong; ecclesiastical property is not placed outside the jurisdiction of the laws governing real estate; when a congregation purchases or sells a property the title deeds are subject to the formality of registration, in the same way as all other

real estate transactions, as prescribed by articles 3443, 3444 and 3450 of our Revised Statutes, which only reproduce the old law. The real estate conceded or sold to Church Trustees or *marguilliers* only acquires the character of mortmain by the registration of the deed of acquisition.

What is there extraordinary or wrong in this law? The intent is merely to place outside of the sphere of trade real estate acquired for religious workshop, and to prevent its expropriation without the consent or against the wish of the inhabitants or of the members of the congregation.

At any rate, if this system be wrong and worthy of condemnation, the Protestants of the Province of Quebec are quite as blamable as the Catholics, as the law of which Mr. Sellar complains applies indistinctly to all religious congregations, Protestant as well as Catholic. Before casting stones at us, let Mr. Sellar and his friends give the example, by asking the Legislature to abolish mortmain in the case of properties belonging to Protestant congregations. I challenge him to have such legislation accepted by the majority of the Protestants of the Province of Quebec.

With what grace therefore does he dare to place among the so-called disabilities of the Protestants of Quebec legislation by which they benefit as well as Catholics and to which they hold as well as Catholics? Is it in this way that an honorable man would act, who is animated by the noble sentiments which justice and equity should inspire?

I can say the same thing about exemption from taxation, which Mr. Sellar also gives as one of his disabilities. In our Province, all property destined for religious worship is, by article 712 of our Municipal Code, exempt from municipal and school taxation. Protestants as well as Catholics profit by this exemption, and I think that they hold to it as much as do the Catholics.

Then, how can the *Gleaner* man find in this a disability for the Protestants? One may be fanatical, but no sensible man has a right thus jauntily to make a mockery of the elementary rules of logic and of the plainest common sense.

WEALTH OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

But where this brave Mr. Sellar completely loses his head is when he speaks of the so-called wealth of the Catholic Church.

"Counting ministers of all denominations", says he, "I do not suppose you would find in Ontario many over 3,000. Quebec has a third less population, yet nearly 8,000 men and women have taken the perpetual vow of obedience to the Church of Rome. Add to these the lay servants and dependants and there must be twenty thousand whose daily bread comes from this gigantic organization."

Like the monkey in Lafontaine's fable, who took the Piræus for a man, the learned editor of the *Gleaner* takes, as members of the Catholic clergy, all members of religious communities, whether brotherhoods or sisterhoods, and with

this he forms the big figure of 8,000. Would you wish to know why he so cheerfully inscribes them among the clergy? Purely because they have made a vow of perpetual obedience to the Church of Rome!

In that case the learned Mr. Sellar is far from the truth: if to be a member of the Catholic clergy, it is sufficient to have made a vow of perpetual obedience to the Church of Rome, there are in the Province of Quebec 1,170,718 ministers of Catholic worship, for the reason that 1,170,718 Catholics who inhabit it are obliged, in religious matters, to absolute obedience to the Church of Rome. There are likewise 320,889 ministers of Catholic worship in Ontario, for I see by the census of 1881 that there is that number of Catholics in the Province of Ontario, and like those of Quebec, they are held to perpetual obedience to the Church of Rome, of course in religious matters only.

These are the consequences of the premises laid down by Mr. Sellar, whom the Equal Rights Association has chosen to inform it about Catholic affairs in the Province of Quebec.

NUMBER OF MINISTERS OF RELIGION.

Happily, the census of 1881, an authority almost as worthy of belief as the editor of the *Gleaner*, gives totally different figures. According to that authority there were at that time in the

Province of Quebec, 2,102 clergymen, 3,783 nuns and 401 brothers of the christian schools, in all 6,286. But the figures given for clergymen comprise Protestant Ministers; they must be numerous as there are in our Province almost as many Protestant as Catholic churches. The census of 1881 gives for all the Province 1280 churches, of which 712 are Catholic and 568 Protestant. The latter must be attended by 400 or 500 ministers, which would leave 1600 or 1700 Catholic priests.

CATHOLIC ALMANAC.

But there is an easier and more certain method of establishing the number of Catholic priests in the Province of Quebec. If the worthy writer of the *Gleaner* had only given himself the trouble of reading the calendars or almanacs for 1890, he would have seen that the Catholic clergy of the Province of Quebec, regular and secular, is composed of 1260 priests, one cardinal, seven archbishops and bishops, one prefect apostolic. The calendars give the name, surname and residence of all those priests, so that there can be no doubt or mistake about their number in the mind of an honorable writer.

These priests, however, are not all engaged in parish work. The documents which I have just mentioned, show with the clearest evidence, even to the wilfully blind, that of these 1260 priests at least 250 are employed at teaching in our classical and commercial colleges and in our nor-

mal schools ; about one hundred more are engaged as chaplains in our charitable institutions or as professors in our theological seminaries, leaving only about nine hundred in parish work. If you divide the number of Catholics by the number of priest ministering to parish wants, you will find that the average of each congregation under the care of a Catholic priest is about thirteen hundred souls.

You are a minister of the Gospel, Mr. Caven ; you know the duties imposed by the spiritual care of a congregation ; you know that in this respect the task of a Catholic priest is two or three times greater than that of a Protestant minister ; in presence of the figures which I have now given, will you not admit, that far from being excessive, as Mr. Sellar pretends, the number of Catholic priests in the Province of Quebec is comparatively slight. Make the same calculations about the Protestant clergy, and you will be surprised at the results at which you will arrive !

REVENUE OF THE CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

And what are the revenues and resources of this clergy which Mr. Sellar represents as so rich ? The tithe alone and a very small amount of perquisites commonly called "le casuel." What does the tithe represent ? It is quite easy to calculate it by taking the *data* furnished by the census of 1881, which can be seen by everybody. At the rate of the twenty-sixth bushel, it forms about the following quantities : 58,889 bushels of wheat,

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58,866 of barley, 601,310 of oats, 142,208 of peas,
55,494 of buckwheat and 12,571 of rye. Estimating
them at current rates, they would represent above
\$500,000 in money. But our priests are not exact-
ing, notwithstanding what Mr. Sellar may say,
and I can assert without fear of contradiction
that on the average they remit or neglect to col-
lect at least 20 per cent of their tithes, which
would leave a real revenue of not more than
\$400,000, to be divided among nine hundred
priests doing parish work, or an average of
\$450.00 each. Adding another hundred dollars for
the *casuel*, which is certainly the highest amount
ever received under that head, we have a total of
\$550.00.

Would you pretend that this is too much, Mr.
Caven ? that Protestant ministers do not receive
as much, even more ?

And that is in truth the so-called wealth of
our Catholic clergy !

As you can perceive, our clergy does not cost
the people so much.

GENEROSITY OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

Let us not omit to add that our clergy returns
to the people a great part of this slender revenue.
It is thanks to the generosity of the clergy that
are founded and maintained the numerous insti-
tutions of charity—asylums, refuges and hospitals,
and institutions of public instruction—which are
seen all over our Province. You would be aston-
ished, you Protestants, at the number of young
men belonging to poor families, whose educa-

tion, classical and commercial, is paid for in whole or in part by our good country priests; you would be equally astonished at the number of legacies bequeathed by those good *curés* to our colleges, on condition that interest thereof be employed to meet the cost of the education of poor children.

All this, it must be admitted, is in the interest of the people, and for its benefit, and gives back to it in another form what it has paid out as tithe or *casuel*; and, as I stated on a recent occasion, our Canadian clergy returns to the people, in one way or another, for purposes of education or charity, blessed and sanctified by the Church, the tithe which it collects from the people.

There is not a country in the world where classical and university education costs so little as it does to the Catholics of our Province, where it is so fully within the reach of all, even of the poorest; there is not one serious and sensible man who, knowing in the slightest our system of education, would refuse to admit that it is solely to our clergy that we owe these inestimable advantages.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

With a sense of honesty more than doubtful, the editor of the *Gleaner* includes among the Catholic clergy, all the members of our religious orders, not omitting members of brotherhoods and sisterhoods. This is a deception that it is unneces-

sary specially to remark, for all well-informed Protestants know perfectly well that these brothers and sisters are no more members of the Catholic clergy than the members of the municipal council of the city of London form part of the government of England. They belong simply to the body of the faithful, like all other Catholics, who have absolutely nothing to do with the government or the management of religious affairs. The Church exists in all its integrity outside of these communities, which are merely associations for the purposes of charity and public instruction. They might disappear without in the least affecting the Church of Rome. The only difference, that would then be felt, as regards Catholics of the Province of Quebec, is, that in place of having to take care of the sick and infirm as well as for the instruction of their children, brothers and sister who work gratuitously, without other remuneration than what is strictly necessary to keep and clothe them modestly, Catholics would have to pay laymen, who most certainly would cost much more.

Permit me to cite one example, in order to show the truth of this assertion.

We have in this Province three asylums where the insane and idiots are maintained at the expense of the Government. Two of these are under the care of nuns, and another, that of Beauport, under laymen. In this asylum, the annual cost for each patient is \$132. At the Longue-

Pointe asylum, otherwise known as the Asylum of St. Jean de Dieu, which belongs to the Sisters of Providence, the Government only pays \$100 per annum. And the Sisters of Charity, who have under their care the Asylum of Saint Ferdinand d'Halifax, for idiotic women, only receive \$80 per annum for each patient. It is acknowledged that the Longue-Pointe asylum is at least as well kept as that of Beauport; and yet the price is \$32.00 less. As the Longue-Pointe asylum contains more than a thousand patients kept at the expense of the Government, it is evident that the sisters enable the Province to economize to the extent of \$32,000 per annum, compared to the amount which it would have to pay, if the asylum were kept by laymen, as that of Beauport.

The same remark applies to the other benevolent institutions under the care of religious orders. It appears by the public accounts for 1889 that the number of benevolent institutions subsidized by the Province is 94, of which 73, or 77.7 per cent, are under the care of religious orders. The sum paid to all these institutions is \$41,956, of which \$24,480.33 to establishments maintained by religious orders, and \$17,475.67 for those kept by members of the laity, Protestant and Catholic. That is to say, that institutions under the care of religious orders, which represent 77.7 per cent in number and much more in importance, receive only 58.34 per cent of the sums voted by the Legislature for the maintainance of benevolent institutions.

Do not these figures give me the right to assert, that even from a material or pecuniary point of view, the religious orders, which have the care of these benevolent institutions, are not only not a burden upon the Catholic people but a real benefit to it, a means of relieving it from heavy taxation? In a Christian country, there must be means adopted, in one way or another, to provide for the wants of the sick, the infirm, the orphans, the poor, and of the thousand of unfortunate creatures, who, if not helped by somebody, would necessarily drag on a wretched existence or perish in the public streets. This is one of the first duties of society. In other countries, this is provided for by taxation, by the State or municipalities; in the Province of Quebec, Catholics are free from these taxes, because their religious orders provide for these wants, and gratuitously, with the exception of the small allowance voted by the Legislature.

Where is there a reasonable man who conscientiously and sincerely would say that such orders live at the expense of the people? It is indeed the contrary which is true; it is the people who live to a great extent at the expense of these orders.

I would appeal to you, Protestants of the other Provinces who do not know our institutions; you whom a shameless fanatic would wish to rouse against these religious orders which do so much good in our Province; you, who have in your hearts sentiments of justice and Christian charity, come and see our convents,

our asylums, our hospitals; come and see them at work, see with your own eyes the ills they alleviate, the misery they soothe; you will return, I am certain, fully convinced that these order deserve anything but the condemnation on the part of Christians worthy of the name, be they Protestant or Catholic. You would be astonished at the sight of the good done by these orders with the small resources at their disposal; you would leave those sanctuaries of Christian charity with the same sentiments as those of a distinguished Protestant of our Province, the Hon. J. G. Robertson, whose attachment to Protestantism is undoubted. This is what he said during his budget speech in 1884:

OPINION OF HONORABLE MR. ROBERTSON.

Some years ago I visited these institutions "in Montreal, and I was not only gratified and surprised at the improvement manifested by the pupils under the care and instructions they received, but full of admiration at the Christian and philanthropic spirit manifested by those in charge of these institutions and then made up my mind that every assistance I could render them I would gladly do to the best of my ability. All honor to the philanthropic individuals and communities who devote their means and personal effects in aid of those so grievously afflicted by Divine Providence."

Such is the testimony of a Protestant who has

been engaged in public life for almost a quarter of a century, Minister and Treasurer in six different conservative governments. Should not the testimony of a man of that standing be accepted in preference to that of an obscure journalist, hardly known to the handful of readers who live in his neighborhood? It may be allowable to have prejudices, but reason will permit no man to be at open war with logic and sound sense.

ADVANTAGES OF THESE INSTITUTIONS.

Our teaching communities secure to us also incontestable educational advantages. I do not hesitate to say that in our convents and girls' boarding schools, instruction does not cost half as much as it does in Protestant institutions of a like nature. The Christian Brothers and other orders also give to young men a superior education, almost for nothing, if we compare it with its cost in other places. According to the report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for 1888, there are in the teaching body 1804 sisters, 585 brothers and 322 members of the clergy, that is, 322 priests or ecclesiastics. According to this report the average salary paid to lay teachers is \$363 per annum, and that paid to clerical teachers, brothers and ecclesiastics, is only \$205 or \$158 less; so that these 907 clerical teachers cost yearly \$148,306 less than an equal number of lay teachers. These figures are founded in a public and official document.

And these are the members of religious orders whom Mr. Sellar represents to Protestants of the other Provinces as parasites, living at the expense of the people, a cause of ruin for the Catholic population of the Province of Quebec!

Is it possible to be guilty of a greater outrage against truth?

TAXATION OF RELIGIOUS PROPERTIES.

Wilfully confusing together the properties of religious communities with those of the churches, Mr. Sellar says that they are held in mortmain and are "exempt from taxation."

This again is nothing but misrepresentation.

True it is that our religious orders possess their properties in mortmain, in the sense that these properties belong to the order as a collective body, as a moral being, and not to its members in particular; but this does not prevent these properties from being within the domain of commerce, that is, of being susceptible of purchase and sale like property belonging to private individuals. As a question of fact, I know of many such sales. The Quebec Seminary, the Seminary of St. Sulpice and many other religious orders have sold their properties, when favorable opportunities were offered; they still continue such sales, as also do other communities of the same kind.

At all events, this ownership in mortmain is not an attribute of the religious characters of these

orders; it is merely the application of the general law which governs all corporations of this kind, whether Protestant or Catholic. Hence it is folly to seek to find in this order of things a disability for Protestants who participate and benefit by the law, absolutely in the same manner as Catholics. It is a matter of public order, the application of the general law of corporations, and it is only ignorance or bad faith which would find therein something of whole to complain.

As to taxation, Mr. Sellar is simply untruthful, when he says in a general manner that the property of religious corporations is exempt from taxes. This is what is laid down by article 712 of our Municipal Code which refers to the matter:

" 712. The following property is not taxable:

" 1. Property belonging to her majesty, or
" held in trust for her use;.....

" 3. Property belonging to *Fabriques*, or religious, charitable, or educational institutions or
" corporations, or occupied by such *Fabriques*
" institutions a corporations *only for the end for*
" *which they were established, and not possessed solely by*
" *them to derive a revenue therefrom.* "

As easily seen, the exemption applies only and exclusively to properties which the religious orders uses directly for its particular ends. Thus the Quebec Seminary owns in the City of Quebec, besides the land on which are erected the buildings of the Seminary itself and of Laval University, a number of other properties which have been bequeathed to it for the purpose of aiding in the edu-

cation of poor children. On these last named properties, the Seminary pays municipal taxes like other owners and the exemption exists in its favor only upon properties devoted to purposes of education.

The same state of things exists in Quebec for the Ursulines, and at Montreal for the gentlemen of St. Sulpice, the Ladies of the Congregation, the Sisters of the Hotel-Dieu, of the General Hospital, etc., etc. These institutions have erected stores and shops on the sites of their old establishments in the centre of the city, and on these they pay taxes like all other proprietors.

This exemption moreover exists in like manner in favor of all benevolent and educational institutions, whether Protestant or Catholic. I can add that Protestants never miss the occasion to avail themselves of this privilege and to have recourse to the courts in order to avoid the payment of taxes which municipalities sometimes endeavor to impose on their properties, exempt though they are from taxes.

Thus, this exemption of taxation which so jars upon Mr. Sellar's weak nerves does not apply to all religious properties and is not an exclusive privilege in favor of Catholic institutions; it flows from the common law, which is based, not on the religious character which has nothing to do with it, but on the purposes and end of the institutions, which are of public order and interest. In our Province, even among Catholics, some are of opinion that these exemptions should not

exist; others maintain the contrary; it is a question under discussion; but these opinions are based on economic reasons and not on religious considerations. The same diversity of opinion exists among Protestants, who cannot reasonably complain of the system by which they benefit equally with Catholics.

THE CATHOLIC CLERGY

Mr. Sellar asserts that the priests, members of religious orders and sisters are 8,000 in number in our Province, and that adding to these "the lay servants and dependants, there must be 20,000 whose daily bread comes from this gigantic organization."

This also is one of these assertions which it is difficult to qualify otherwise than as a lying statement.

The number of priests and bishops in the Province is given exactly, in the calendar, it is 1,269; the number of members of brotherhoods and sisterhoods, devoting themselves to teaching is given in the *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, it is 2,389; add 1,000, which is more than the actual number, for the brothers and sisters, who devote themselves to works of charity, in hospitals, refuges and asylums of every kind, and we will have a total of 4,658 or about one half the number given by Mr. Sellar.

As to servants, whom he estimates to be

12,000 in number, I assert that they do not exceed 3,000 and I challenge him to prove the contrary. In almost all the communities, there are lay sisters and lay brothers engaged in the manual labors of their communities, so that the number of lay servants is almost nothing. The number of servants of parish priests is quite as inconsiderable, and most certainly does not exceed 1,500. By adding the servants of the religious orders, we have a total of 4,500 or not more the third of the number given by Mr. Sellar. That is to say, that far from reaching the figure of 20,000, the population of which this gentleman speaks, is at the utmost 9,158. Simply an error of more than half!

SERVICES AND LABORS OF THESE PERSONS.

What is returned to the Catholics of the Province of Quebec by these 9,158 persons? Most perfect religious service, superior education in all its branches, commercial and agricultural instruction, the care and maintenance of the poor, the orphans, the infirm, the sick and of all these unfortunates who depend upon public charity. Are these works not sufficient usefully to employ 9,158 persons in a population of 1,170,718 people?

It is said that comparisons are odious. If I did not fear to expose myself to the reproach of making them, I would make one which would expose more clearly the full extent of the injustice of which Mr. Sellar has been guilty towards our clergy and the religious communities of Catholics in the Province of Quebec.

scours, les serviteurs, enfin tout ce qui lui passe par l'imagination. Calculons de la même façon pour Ontario. Ces 3,000 ministres protestants, pour lesquels j'ai le plus grand respect, sont, en général, des chefs de familles, faisant vivre leurs femmes et leurs enfants. Il n'est pas exagéré, je pense, d'assumer que ces 3,000 familles se composent en moyenne de cinq personnes chacune, ce qui fait de suite une population de 15,000 âmes. Il est raisonnable de supposer, en moyenne, au moins un serviteur pour chacune de ces familles, ce qui fait 3,000 à ajouter et donne un total de 18,000 personnes "dont le pain quotidien vient de cette organisation gigantesque." Pour les mêmes fins, c'est-à-dire le ministère curial ou le service du culte proprement dit, nous ne trouvons dans la province de Québec que 2,500 personnes, au plus : 1,000 prêtres et 1,500 serviteurs.

La différence est-elle assez sensible pour faire toucher du doigt tout ce qu'il y a d'exagération et de fausseté dans la lettre de M. Sellar ?

Etablissons une autre comparaison.

J'ai démontré plus haut que les 9,158 prêtres, frères, sœurs et serviteurs que nous avons ici nous donnent le service religieux, l'instruction dans toutes ses branches, pour les deux sexes, ainsi que le soin de nos institutions de bienfaisance, et cela à leurs frais et dépens, pour ces dernières. Dans Ontario, le peuple est obligé de faire vivre une population deux fois plus nombreuse, seulement pour se procurer le service religieux ; il lui reste ensuite à faire vivre le personnel de son corps

enseignant et celui de tous ses établissements de bienfaisance, pour le moins aussi nombreux que celui qui tire son pain quotidien du service religieux.

Je laisse aux gens impartiaux le soin de tirer la conclusion et de dire ce qu'il faut penser de la véracité de M. Sellar, le digne rédacteur du *Gleaner* et l'indigne collaborateur de l'Association des Droits Égaux, si elle a le moindre respect pour la justice et la vérité.

Il me sera peut-être permis d'indiquer en passant la cause de ces exagérations ridicules, dans lesquelles certaines gens se laissent entraîner au sujet des prétendues richesses du clergé catholique.

DIFFÉRENCE ENTRE LES DÉPENSES DES PRÊTRES CATHOLIQUES ET CELLES DES MINISTRES PROTESTANTS

Il existe une différence capitale entre la position du prêtre catholique et celle du ministre protestant. Grâce à son célibat, le premier n'a besoin de pourvoir qu'à sa propre existence, au lieu que l'autre est obligé de faire vivre toute une famille.

Avec un revenu de cinq ou six cents piastres, le curé catholique vit bien, fait même des économies, que la discipline ecclésiastique l'oblige d'employer à des bonnes œuvres. Le ministre protestant, au contraire, ne trouve que le juste nécessaire, pour lui et sa famille, dans un revenu de six cents piastres, et si son traitement est assez élevé pour lui permettre de faire des économies, règle générale, il donne tout naturellement ces économies à sa famille, au lieu d'en faire profiter

exclusivement les institutions d'enseignement, de bienfaisance et de charité.

C'est ainsi que s'accumulent en grande partie par notre clergé, mais sans aucunement surcharger les fidèles, les ressources considérables avec lesquelles sont créées et maintenues la plupart de ces institutions qui font l'admiration de tous ceux qui ne sont pas aveuglés par les préjugés. Ce que le ministre protestant donne aux siens, le prêtre catholique le donne au peuple pour des œuvres de bienfaisance publique.

Qu'y a-t-il en cela qui puisse être une cause de griefs pour les protestants, principalement ceux des autres provinces? Est-ce notre faute si, à cause de leur mariage, l'entretien des ministres protestants est plus dispendieux et ne permet pas à ces derniers de faire, comme les prêtres catholiques, des dotations aux établissements de bienfaisance publique?

Voilà à quoi se réduit la prétendue richesse de l'église catholique.

Je comprends que vous, M. Caven, qui vivez dans une province protestante et ne connaissez que superficiellement notre organisation religieuse, vous puissiez vous laisser entraîner sur ce point à de pareilles exagérations; mais de la part de votre collaborateur Sellar, qui vit au milieu des catholiques et qui affecte de connaître leurs institutions, c'est une malhonnêteté impardonnable, qui lui attache au front un stigmate que, par charité, je m'abstiendrai de nommer.

LE RÉGIME PAROISSIAL ET SES PRÉTENDUS INCONVÉNIENTS
POUR LES PROTESTANTS

M. Sellar n'aime pas le régime paroissial. A l'en croire, ce serait le principal grief des protestants de notre province. Il glose sur notre organisation paroissiale comme un scoliaste et sans plus s'occuper de la vérité que de l'homme dans la lune.

Je n'ai pas besoin de dire qu'il fait preuve d'une ignorance coupable ou d'une mauvaise foi inexcusable, en donnant le régime paroissial et le régime seigneurial comme deux institutions corrélatives ; ceux qui ont fait la moindre étude de nos institutions sous la domination française savent bien que ce n'est pas vrai. " Il semble évident, dit le Dr Dawson, (1) que le régime paroissial n'est pas incompatible avec la tenure anglaise, qu'il est et qu'il a toujours été indépendant de la tenure seigneuriale et que l'uniformité de la loi existe maintenant dans toute la province."

Mais pareilles erreurs ne sont que des bagatelles, pour un homme de la véracité de M. Sellar : je les relègue au second plan, pour ne m'occuper que du plus gros.

"Le prêtre, dit ce véridique écrivain, convoque et préside toutes les assemblées de paroisse et le peuple ne peut rien faire sans sa sanction."

Ceci me rappelle involontairement l'anecdote du cadet novice, donnant des leçons d'exercice militaire.

(1) Lettres publiées dans le *Week* et reproduites dans le *Montreal Gazette* du mois de février 1890.

—“Qu'est-ce que la conversion à droite? demande l'élève. — C'est une évolution à droite, répond le cadet.—Et la conversion à gauche?—C'est la même chose que la conversion à droite, excepté que c'est tout le contraire.”

Ce bon M. Sellar est dans le même cas que le cadet. Il affirme que le peuple ne peut rien faire sans la sanction du prêtre; c'est bien cela, excepté que c'est tout le contraire, qui est vrai. L'érection canonique et civile des paroisses, l'administration des fabriques et toutes les affaires de ce genre ne se font que du consentement des paroissiens, à tel point que ni l'évêque ni le curé ne peuvent rien faire sans ce consentement. Le rôle du curé se borne à la présidence des assemblées, dont les décisions sont arrêtées à la pluralité des voix. Voici ce que dit à ce sujet sir Hector Langevin, dans son *Manuel des Paroisses et Fabriques*:

“ Les assemblées de fabrique doivent être convoquées par le curé ou desservant, sur la demande du marguillier en charge... Le curé ou desservant préside l'assemblée de fabrique. Toutes les affaires s'y décident à la pluralité des voix.”

Dans son *Code des Curés, Marguilliers et Paroissiens*, le juge Beaudry dit à la page 32:

“ C'est à l'évêque qu'appartient l'initiative de l'érection (canonique des paroisses), *mais il ne peut y procéder que sur la demande de la majorité des propriétaires* qui habitent sur le territoire qu'il s'agit d'ériger en paroisse. On comprend facilement cette exigence,

surtout avec notre forme de gouvernement, qui partout est fondée sur le vœu de la majorité.”—“Tous ces édifices, dit plus loin le même auteur en citant Frémerville, leurs établissements, leur construction et leur entretien intéressent beaucoup les habitants, puisqu'aucun de ces établissements ne peut se faire sans qu'ils n'y donnent leur consentement.”

Avec cette mauvaise foi qui le caractérise, l'écrivain du *Gleaner* insinue que ces dispositions de la loi sont éludées par le curé, qui abuse de son influence pour extorquer le consentement des paroissiens.

DÉCLARATION DU DR DAWSON

Aux insinuations de cet ignorant, je me contenterai d'opposer l'affirmation d'un protestant aussi remarquable par son attachement à sa religion que par sa science et son honorabilité. Le Dr S. E. Dawson, de Montréal, dit dans ses lettres au *Week* :

“En lisant beaucoup des écrits publiés sur le régime paroissial dans cette province, on serait porté à croire que les évêques catholiques sont revêtus du pouvoir arbitraire d'ériger, de diviser et d'unir des paroisses à leur gré, comme aussi de construire des églises et des presbytères aux dépens des fidèles, où et comme il leur plaît. Ce n'est pas vrai. Les dîmes et le casuel sont recouvrables de par la loi ; mais les impositions pour les autres fins ecclésiastiques ne peuvent être prélevées sans le consentement du peuple, et, quant à cela, les laïques ont plus de contrôle que les protestants ne le supposent généralement. Toute

la procédure est fixée par la loi et sauvegardée par de nombreuses formalités dont l'inobservance, même sur un seul point, est fatale.

" Sous le régime paroissial, *c'est aux laïques qu'appartient l'initiative de toutes les procédures relatives à l'érection des paroisses, à leur subdivision et à leur union.....* Les papiers, avec les certificats d'observance de toutes les formalités légales, sont examinés par les commissaires, (commissaires laïques nommés par le lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil) qui entendent les parties intéressées et rejettent, modifient ou confirment la répartition au meilleur de leur connaissance. Si j'entre dans tous ces détails oiseux, *c'est pour démontrer aux protestants qu'ils font erreur quand ils supposent que c'est le clergé qui impose ces taxes. Au contraire, ce sont les laïques eux-mêmes qui se taxent.* Sans doute que le clergé use de son influence ici comme partout ailleurs ; mais il ne peut en aucune façon mêler à ces affaires ses fonctions comme dispensateur des sacrements. "

LES TAXES D'ÉGLISE

Toujours avec sa bonne foi accoutumée, M. Sellar nous dit que les taxes pour les constructions d'églises forcent beaucoup de cultivateurs à vendre leurs propriétés et à s'expatrier.

C'est encore une fausseté. Qu'il cite donc un seul cas à l'appui de ces méchantes insinuations !

Pour justifier ses odieux dénigrements et exciter la haine contre la majorité des habitants de la pro-

vince de Québec, M. Sellar oublie le respect qu'un honnête homme doit à la vérité, jusqu'au point de donner le système paroissial comme la cause du dépeuplement des cantons anglais et protestants. A l'appui de cette prétention saugrenue, il cite un cas qui donne une idée de son exactitude et de sa force de logique.

A son dire, un évêque catholique eut un jour l'audace d'ériger en paroisse canonique une colonie d'immigrants catholiques qui s'accroissaient et prospéraient depuis vingt ans. Savez-vous à quoi ils étaient arrivés après ces vingt ans de progrès et de prospérité? Ils avaient le suprême bonheur de former une population " composée surtout de journaliers, employés par les protestants. "

N'est-ce pas qu'ils étaient parvenus au parfait bonheur, quand l'évêque eut la cruauté de leur enlever cette enviable position, en les érigeant en paroisse canonique? Imaginez-vous le malheur qui leur advint de cette érection en paroisse? Le curé, s'il faut en croire M. Sellar, fut assez barbare pour leur trouver de l'argent à un taux d'intérêt peu élevé et leur faire acheter les propriétés de leurs maîtres protestants, qui disparurent insensiblement. Et le brave homme ajoute que c'est là l'histoire de vingtaines de colonies protestantes, répandues dans la province.

EXODE DES PROTESTANTS

Je laisse au Dr Dawson le soin de faire connaître les causes de cet exode de la population protestante,

qui n'a absolument aucune corrélation avec le régime paroissial.

“ Les Cantons de l'Est, dit-il, furent établis par des immigrants venant de la Grande-Bretagne et des Etats-Unis. Depuis que, ces années dernières, les riches terres du Nord-Ouest ont été ouvertes à la colonisation, les jeunes gens sont devenus remuants. Le prix de vente d'une ferme permet d'acheter dans le Nord-Ouest dix fois autant de terrain, que l'on pense de meilleure qualité. Les charmes de la vie des villes attirent la jeunesse dans les grands centres : les profits de l'agriculture dans l'est sont anéantis par la concurrence de l'ouest, et pour ces raisons, les chefs de jeunes familles sont dans l'alternative ou d'émigrer dans l'ouest ou de se voir laissés seuls pour cultiver leurs fermes. Il se produit de cette façon un mouvement constant : les Anglais partent et les Français arrivent....

“ La théorie que le régime paroissial est lié au régime seigneurial n'explique pas ce mouvement, car elle n'est pas vraie. Et même si elle était vraie, cette explication ne serait pas désirable. Si les cultivateurs anglais peuvent améliorer leur sort en vendant leurs fermes, il est certainement préférable qu'ils puissent trouver des acheteurs. C'est mieux que de laisser ces fermes à l'abandon. Et ce mouvement de la population vers l'ouest n'est pas particulier aux Cantons de l'Est. Dans le Vermont, le New-Hampshire et les autres Etats de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, le nombre des fermes abandonnées, retournant à l'état sauvage, est

si grand qu'il cause de sérieuses alarmes, au point que l'on en est réduit à concevoir des plans pour activer l'immigration. "

Telle est la vérité, franchement et honnêtement exposée par un écrivain protestant dont la position sociale laisse bien loin dans l'ombre le piètre individu du *Gleaner*.

Comme le dit si bien le Dr Dawson, quel mal y a-t-il à ce que les catholiques achètent à gros prix les propriétés des protestants, quand ceux-ci trouvent avantageux de les vendre pour aller chercher fortune dans l'ouest? Est-ce la faute des catholiques? est-ce la faute du régime paroissial, si l'engouement pour les terres du Manitoba et du Minnesota s'empare des protestants? Soutenir une telle prétention, c'est tout simplement insensé, c'est une insulte au bon sens des protestants, qui feraient acte d'un fanatisme ridicule en abandonnant ainsi leurs terres pour la seule fin d'éviter le contact des catholiques! S'ils ont peur des catholiques, tant pis pour eux; mais ce n'est assurément pas la faute du régime paroissial.

Quel grief y a-t-il dans tout cela?

LES PROTESTANTS ONT LEURS ÉCOLES

M. Sellar raconte que les protestants sont devenus si peu nombreux qu'il leur est bien difficile de maintenir leurs écoles.

C'est aussi peu vrai que tout le reste. Sir John Rose, qui a représenté le comté où M. Sellar étale sa prose, connaissait pour le moins aussi bien que cet

obscur journaliste la position des protestants, quant aux écoles. Dans son discours sur la confédération, il a démenti par anticipation les prétentions mensongères de l'homme du *Gleaner*. Je cite ses paroles :

"Nous, anglais protestants, nous ne saurions oublier que même avant l'union des provinces, alors que la majorité française avait tout le pouvoir, on nous a accordé sans restriction tous nos droits à l'éducation séparée. Nous ne saurions oublier que jamais on n'a essayé de nous empêcher d'élever et d'instruire nos enfants à notre guise et que nous avons toujours eu notre juste part des subventions sous le contrôle de la majorité française et le droit d'établir des écoles séparées là où nous l'avons trouvé convenable. *Un simple particulier peut établir une école dissidente et obtenir une part raisonnable des subventions, s'il prouve qu'il peut réunir quinze élèves.*"

Est-ce assez clair ? Est-ce une réfutation assez péremptoire des élucubrations de M. Sellar ?

Sous le rapport de l'éducation, les catholiques d'Ontario sont loin d'être aussi bien traités par la majorité protestante. Et pourtant, leur position est bien meilleure que celle de leurs co-religionnaires du Manitoba ou du Nouveau-Brunswick. Qu'arriverait-il, si, dans la province de Québec, la majorité se mettait dans l'esprit d'organiser en faveur des minorités catholiques des autres provinces, un mouvement semblable à celui que votre association dirige contre nous, en faveur de la minorité protestante de Québec ? Si vous faites acte de bons citoyens en soulevant les

protestants des autres provinces contre les catholiques de Québec, vous admettez, M. Caven, que nous serions parfaitement justifiables, ne fut-ce qu'à titre de représailles, de soulever les catholiques des autres provinces contre la minorité protestante de Québec. Quel serait alors le sort de cette minorité ?

Mais ne craignez rien : les catholiques de Québec ne sont pas agressifs ; tout ce qu'ils demandent, c'est de vivre en paix avec leurs compatriotes protestants et d'avoir la satisfaction de dire que, dans tout l'univers, il n'y a pas un seul pays où la minorité soit traitée avec autant de justice et de libéralité, que l'est la minorité protestante de notre province.

III

LA DÎME — LES TRIBUNAUX ANGLAIS SE DÉGRADENT EN AIDANT A SON RECOUVREMENT

J'ai indiqué plus haut ce que rapporte la dîme au clergé catholique et fait voir qu'en moyenne elle ne donne guère plus de \$500 à chaque prêtre occupé dans le ministère curial. Ce n'est pas excessif, tant s'en faut. Cependant, au dire de M. Sellar, ce revenu permettrait au clergé d'accumuler des richesses considérables et de maintenir toutes ces institutions de bienfaisance et d'éducation qui font la force de notre nationalité.

Malgré lui, le monsieur du *Gleaner* admet par là même que le clergé fait un usage utile des revenus provenant de la dîme.

Néanmoins, comme question de fait, il faut dire

que la plus grande partie des ressources de nos plus anciennes institutions de bienfaisance provient des dotations qui leur furent faites sous la domination française, sans préjudice à personne. Le séminaire de Montréal, celui de Québec, les Ursulines, les Dames de la Congrégation et les Sœurs de l'Hôtel-Dieu, à Montréal, qui font tant de bien avec leurs propres ressources, tirent la plus grande partie de leurs revenus de leurs propriétés foncières.—Qu'est-ce que cela fait aux protestants ?

M. Sellar prétend que l'introduction du système des dîmes dans les parties de la province situées en dehors des seigneuries est une violation des institutions anglaises, une usurpation des privilèges des protestants, parce que ce territoire devait être régi exclusivement par les lois anglaises.

Je m'occuperai plus loin de l'introduction des lois anglaises dans le pays et je démontrerai que, sur ce point comme sur les autres, M. Sellar est dans l'erreur ; mais, même en supposant qu'il soit dans le vrai, quant à ce point, il n'en aurait pas moins tort de dire que l'introduction du système des dîmes dans les cantons est une violation de la loi anglaise, puisque la dîme fait essentiellement partie des institutions de la Grande-Bretagne.

LA DÎME EN IRLANDE

Sous ce rapport encore, je ne crains pas de comparer la conduite de mes compatriotes à celle des protestants. Ici, les catholiques n'ont jamais songé

à faire des rentes à leur clergé en faisant payer la dîme aux protestants. En Irlande, c'était bien différent. Dans beaucoup de paroisses exclusivement catholiques, ces derniers étaient tenus de payer la dîme à un ministre protestant qui ne résidait pas même dans la paroisse, pour la bonne raison qu'il n'y avait pas de protestants. Et ce n'était pas la dîme du vingt-sixième de certains produits, comme chez nous, mais du dixième des produits du sol, du bétail et même des salaires.

Voilà ce qu'a fait le protestantisme en Irlande !

Et c'est au nom du protestantisme, qui est coupable de ces abominations, du protestantisme qui a pressuré pendant plus de deux siècles les catholiques d'Irlande en faveur des sinécuristes du clergé anglican, et tout cela au moyen de l'institution de la dîme — c'est au nom, dis-je, de ce même protestantisme que vous venez aujourd'hui prêcher la croisade contre l'institution de la dîme telle qu'elle existe dans la province de Québec, où elle n'affecte aucunement les protestants.

Il est permis d'avoir de l'audace—*audaces fortuna juvat*—mais il me semble que ces considérations devraient faire comprendre à vous et à vos collègues de l'Association des Droits Égaux, que s'il est des gens qui ne peuvent pas, sans indécence, parler contre la dîme, ce sont assurément les protestants anglais partageant vos idées.

LA DÎME EN ANGLETERRE

En effet, s'il est un pays au monde où l'institution de la dîme faisait et fait encore partie du droit public, c'est bien l'Angleterre. Cela est admis par tous les auteurs qui ont écrit sur les lois de ce pays. Pour n'en citer qu'un, voici ce que dit Stephens, dans ses *Commentaries* :

“ Les dîmes sont une espèce d'héritages incorporels susceptibles d'être possédés soit par des laïques, soit par le clergé, à raison de ses églises La dîme est le dixième de l'accroissement provenant annuellement des produits du sol et du bétail, quant aux terrains, et de l'industrie personnelle des habitants de la paroisse. On appelle ordinairement *prédiale* la première espèce de dîme, ou celle du grain, de l'herbe, du houblon et du bois; *mixte*, celle de la laine, du lait, des cochons, etc, et *personnelle*, celle des occupations manuelles, des métiers, des pêcheries et autres sujets semblables. Les dîmes prédiales et mixtes sont payables au dixième et en nature; mais la dîme personnelle n'est payable qu'au dixième des profits nets. ” (1)

En vertu des lois de commutation, passées depuis 1836, les dîmes payables en nature ont été remplacées par des taxes—*tithe-rent-charge*—payables en argent, mais équivalant au produit des dîmes en nature. Ces rentes, comme les dîmes qu'elles représentent, sont des charges privilégiées sur la propriété foncière. La dîme existe pareillement en Ecosse et les Irlandais

(1) *Stephens Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. 2, p. 725.

savent mieux que personne si elle existe dans leur pays.

Donc, la dîme fait partie de la loi anglaise et si cette loi avait été appliquée aux parties de la province situées en dehors des seigneuries, la dîme existerait là de plein droit. Quel mal y a-t-il à ce qu'elle n'y existe qu'à titre de concomittance avec l'église catholique ? Qu'est-ce que cela fait aux protestants que les catholiques paient leurs curés en blé, en avoine ou en orge, au lieu de les payer en argent, si cela leur plait ? Ils ne paient que le vingt-sixième minot, au lieu que sous la loi anglaise, pour laquelle M. Sellar a tant d'amour, ils paieraient le dixième, non seulement des grains, mais encore des animaux, de la laine, du bois, du produit de leur industrie, enfin de tout. Les Canadiens-français ne tiennent pas à cette libéralité de la loi anglaise, qui leur ferait payer deux fois et demi plus cher pour l'entretien de leur clergé, et les protestants raisonnables admettront qu'ils ont raison.

LES CANADIENS ET LA DÎME

"Lors de la révolution de 1837, dit M. Sellar, les habitants furent excités à y prendre part, parce qu'une des réformes promises était l'abolition de la dîme."

Cette fausseté ne se trouve dans aucun autre ouvrage sérieux que le rapport de Lord Durham. Le monsieur du *Gleaner* serait bien en peine, si on lui

industry, in fact on everything on their farms. French Canadians do not long to enjoy this liberality of English law, which would make them pay two and a half as much for the support of their clergy, and reasonable Protestants will admit that they are not far wrong.

CANADIANS AND TITHES

"At the rebellion of 1837, says Mr. Sellar, the habitants were stimulated to take part in it, because one of the reforms promised was the abolition of tithes."

This falsehood is found in no other serious work than in the report of Lord Durham. The gentleman of the *Gleaner* would be much troubled if he were called upon to prove this false assertion.

"A misconception to be avoided is," said Mr. Sellar a few lines farther, "that the tithes represent all that the habitant contributes to the support of his clergyman..... To secure a pew, he has to pay a yearly rental, and for all the rites and services of church and priest, he has to pay."

LYING FOR THE PLEASURE OF LYING

The above simply proves that Mr. Sellar lies for the mere pleasure of lying or else that he is ignorant of plainest part of the question on which he writes. The pew rents belong to the *Fabrique*; that which is paid for Church services and other rights—*surplice fees*, *mortuaries* of the English Church—also belongs to the *Fabrique*, except a slight percentage in favor of the *cure*. In his

Manuel des Paroisses, Sir Hector Langevin positively asserts "that the goods and revenues of the *Fabrique* are composed of: 1o real estate in ownership or enjoyment; 2o rents; 3o pew-rents; 4o amount of collections; 5o amount disposed in poor boxes; 6o donations; 7o furniture and moveable effects; 8o the *casuel* "

Catholics have absolutely nothing else to pay. If these revenues belong to the *Fabrique*, which is managed by the Trustees or *marguilliers*, as agents and mandataries of the parishioners, what should we think of the assertion of Mr. Sellar who states that they all belong to the *curé* ?

That the tithes may be paid in certain cases "with repugnance," is quite possible, for among Catholics as well as among Protestants, there are people who do not like to pay their debts. But these are isolated cases, they are the exception and not the rule, and in speaking in general terms as he has done, the *Gleaner* man is guilty of calumny.

APOSTLE OF IRRELIGION

All these reckless assertions are ridiculous and can only injure the reputation of the man who publishes them; this justifies me in not insisting further on the subject; but in speaking of the collection of tithes and of the right to enforce their payment by legal process before the courts, Mr. Sellar openly becomes the apostle of irreligion, apostacy, and even of atheism. According to him, the English courts are guilty of a crime in lending their assistance for the recovery of tithes, and he

wants to know if the tribunals of the British Empire should participate in enforcing "these demands and become the collectors of these contributions."

Two authorities have the right to enforce the payment of tithes: civil authority and religious authority. If you remove the first, the other alone will remain. But the Catholic, who eaten up by avarice, would prefer his money to his religion, need only apostatize in order to free himself from the religious authority of the Church. To free him from the civil authority and submit him to ecclesiastical authority alone, would be place him on the road which would necessarily lead to irreligion, apostacy and even atheism. And it is this which Mr. Sellar claims, in the name of Protestantism and Christian principles!

I do not hesitate to say that in becoming the champion of this abominable doctrine, the *Gleaner* man preaches a theory which is immoral and anti-religious, which deserves the reprobation of all good Christians and especially of the Equal Rights Association, if it have the least respect for religious sentiments. In support of this assertion, will cite the opinions of Wedderburne, a Protestant, whose opinions are at least worth as much as those of the gentleman of the *Gleaner*.

In the course of the debate on the Act of 1774, some members of the House of Commons proposed the suppression of tithes. This remarkable man, whom I have just named, opposed the motion, on the reason that it was of a nature to encourage apostacy and irreligion.

“ But then it is complained, says the Solicitor-
 “ General (1) that these clergy are to be allowed
 “ to hold, receive and enjoy their accustomed dues
 “ and rights. What! Sir, would you tolerate their
 “ religion and tell them at the same time, that
 “ they shall have no priests? or would you have
 “ these priests subsist upon the casual benefactions
 “ of individuals? Is it not better that they
 “ should subsist under the authority of the State,
 “ than these priests, who so zealously endeavour to
 “ gain an empire over the minds of the people,
 “ should be placed in a state of dependence on
 “ them for their maintenance?.....

" (2) First I agree that the Roman Catholic
" religion ought to be the established religion of the
" country, in its present state..... I do not mean
" to assert that this should be perpetually the
" state of Canada; or that we are by law to
" enact that the people are not to be converted;
" or that the tithe shall remain in the Popish
" clergy; or that the tithe shall sink; *I would not*
" *hold out the temptation, that if you are a convert, you*
" *shall not pay tithes.* If the majority of a parish are
" Popish, there ought to be a Popish clergy in that
" parish."

IV

**THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PARISH SYSTEM IN
PARTS OF THE PROVINCE SITUATED OUTSIDE
OF THE SEIGNIORIES IS A VIOLATION OF
A FORMAL ENGAGEMENT AND
▲ USURPATION**

The parish system forms part of the old French law. Mr. Sellar claims that the introduction of

[1] CAVENDISH. *Debates on the Canada Bill of 1774*, p. 54.
[2] " " " " " 218

1 CAVENDISH. *Declines on the Canada Bill* 1774, p. 37.
2 " " " " " 218

this system in parts of the Province situated outside of the Seigniories is a violation of the Act of 1774 and a usurpation. If I prove that this Act introduced French law throughout the whole extent of the Province of Quebec, I will be proving that Mr. Sellar is in error and that the parish system has, since the passing of this Act, existed as of right throughout the whole extent of our country.

The boundaries given to the Province of Quebec by Act of 1774, comprised all our present territory, all the territory of the Province of Ontario, Michigan, Wisconsin and even a part of Illinois, as they extended to the Ohio and Mississippi. In all that immense territory it was French law which was to prevail to the exclusion of English law, except as to criminal law and some other parts of English law. The text of the statute is positive on this point:

Sect. V "..... It is hereby declared that his Majesty's subjects, professing the religion of the Church of Rome of and in the said Province of Quebec, may have, hold and enjoy, the free exercise of the religion of the Church of Rome;... and that the clergy of the said Church may hold, receive and enjoy their accustomed dues and rights with respect to such persons only as shall profess the said religion. (14 Geo. III (1774) c. 83, s. V.)

Sect. VIII "..... that all his Majesty's Canadian subjects within the Province of Quebec,.... may also hold and enjoy their property and possessions, together with all customs and usages

“ *relative thereto and all other their civil rights;.....*
 “ and that in all matters of controversy, relative
 “ to property and civil rights, resort shall be had
 “ to the laws of Canada, as the rule for the deci-
 “ sion of the same ; and all causes that shall here-
 “ after be instituted in any of the Courts of Jus-
 “ tice, to be appointed within and for the said
 “ Province by his Majesty, his heirs and succes-
 “ sors, shall, with respect to such property and
 “ rights, be determined agreeably to the said laws
 “ and customs of Canada... (14 Geo III (1774)
 “ c. 83. s. VIII. ”

DECLARATION OF LORD THURLOW

The text is quite positive; but its sense becomes much clearer, if we see the interpretation given to the Act by the Ministers who prepared it as well as by other members of the House of Commons. In explaining the tenor of the Bill, attorney-general Thurlow said in formal terms :

(1) “ In order to make an acquisition either
 “ available or secure, this seems to me to be the line
 “ that ought to be followed—you ought to change
 “ those laws only which relate to the French
 “ Sovereignty, and in their place substitute laws
 “ which should relate to the new Sovereign; but
 “ with respect to all other laws, all other customs
 “ and institutions whatever, which are indifferent
 “ to the state of subjects and sovereign, human-
 “ ity, justice and wisdom equally conspire to
 “ advise you to leave them to the people just as
 “ the were.”

[1] CAVENDISH, *Debates on Canada Bill of 1774*, p. 30.

Section IX of the act of 1774, reads as follows.

"IX, Provided always that nothing in this act contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to any lands that have been granted by His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to be holden in free and common soccage." (14 Geo. III, (1774) c. 83 s. IX)

It is upon this clause that Mr. Sellar grounds his claim that the Act of 1774 restricted French law and the parish system to the seigniories.

Let us examine the interpretation which should be given to this article of the constitution of 1774.

OBJECT OF THE ACT OF 1774.—APPLICATION OF SECTION VIII.

No one will, I suppose, deny that the object of this law was to completely separate the French Canadians from the English colonists and to establish the latter in the Province of New-England, as much as possible on the borders of the sea. This was stated in express terms by solicitor-general Wedderburne. But the difficulty was to ascertain if the southern boundary, as defined in the Bill, did not encroach on the territory of the province of New-York and if it were not of such a nature as to affect the rights of the inhabitants of that colony, who possessed lands under english tenure and were governed by the law of England. It was asserted that by changing or defining the frontier, the King could deprive the colonists of New-York and of other English colonies of the advantages of English law and submit them to

what was called the slavery of the French regime, by including them in the territory of the province of Quebec which was to be exclusively subjected to French laws. To allay these fears, there were introduced in the bill the *proviso* contained in section II and the one cited by Mr. Sellar which is only its corollary. But this proviso, as it clearly and undoubtedly appears by the debate in the House of Commons, applied only to the lands above-mentioned, that is to say, to the border parts of the English colonies which might be included in the province of Quebec by the delimitation of the frontier line, and not at all to that part of the Province comprised between the seigniories and the neighboring colonies which to-day forms the township. Burke, who devoted himself specially to the matter, set it forth very clear in the course of the debate upon the bill:

OPINION OF BURKE.—EXPLANATION OF
SECTION VIII.

(1) "In the first place, when I heard that
"this bill was to be brought in on the principle
"that parliament were to draw a line of circum-
"valuation about our colonies, and to establish a
"sort of arbitrary power, *by bringing around about*
"Canada the control of other people, *different in manners,*
"language and laws, from those of the inhabitants
"of this colony. I thought it of the highest im-
"portance that we should endeavor to make this
"boundary as clear as possible. I conceived it ne-
"cessary for the security of those who are to be

[1] CAVENDISH. *Debates on the Canada Bill of 1774*, p. 19 et seq.

"beseiged in this manner, and also necessary
 "for the British subject, who should be restricted
 "within the limits to which he was meant to be
 "restricted and not be allowed to venture un-
 "knowingly into the colony to disturb its posses-
 "sors. I wish these limits to be ascertained and
 "fixed with precision for the sake of both parties.
 "Having this object in my view, I shall first con-
 "sider the line drawn in the proclamation of
 "1763... This line, the south west frontier, the
 "people of Canada acquiesced in. They have since
 "come before his majesty's government, and have
 "laid before it a complaint in which they state,
 "that this was a line drawn especially for the
 "purpose of territorial jurisdiction, and the secu-
 "rity of property; but they represent it is a line
 "ill-suited for a growing country... This line,
 "they say, is only fifteen leagues distant from
 "Montreal, and yet it is only on this side that
 "the lands are fertile and that agriculture can be
 "cultivated to much advantage..... So far as this
 "bill conveys to the natives of that country every
 "right, civil and religious, held either by the
 "great charter of nature, or by the treaty of 1763,
 "or by the King's proclamation, or by what above
 "all it ought to be held by, the lenity, the equity,
 "the justice of good government, -I would give
 "the enjoyment of these in the largest and most
 "beneficial manner; but the very same line of
 "justice, which I would extend to the subjects of
 "Great Britain ought not, in my opinion, to be
 "conceded to the old Canadians.

"Having drawn the line that best becomes

" the regulation of right, the question comes
 " now—whether what they ask is a favor which
 " can be granted them, without doing a material
 " injury to the most substantial rights of others ?
 " whether the effect of the power given by this
 " clause may not be to reduce British free subjects
 " to French slaves ? Now if the line drawn from
 " Lake Nipissing is to be altered, at whose expense
 " will it be altered ? The colony of New-York
 " claims all the country south of that line till it
 " meets with some other British colonies of known
 " boundaries ; and these are claims which ought
 " at least to be heard, *before the people of that colony*
 " *are handed over to the French government.* "

" However, after this line had been settled to
 " forty-five degrees, it was found that the French
 " and English maps differed very considerably as
 " to the position of this degree ; and this differ-
 " ence occasioned a great deal of confusion, so
 " that the colony of New-York, which bound
 " next to Canada, had perpetual controversy about
 " the limitary line, though they agreed that
 " the line should be settled at forty-five degrees,
 " they never agreed where the forty fifth
 " degree of latitude was. To remedy this
 " confusion, in 1767, the colonies, by a very
 " provident order of the Crown, determined to
 " hold a meeting on the frontiers, at which they
 " took an actual observation, and fixed the lati-
 " tude of forty-five degrees to the head of the
 " northern part of Lake Champlain. When they
 " had fixed this limit, the colony of New-York
 " gave up all that part included in the triangle,

" the base of which was a line drawn at the angle
 " of forty-five degrees..... Having got that line
 " drawn, a parallel was to be run from east to
 " west, till stopped by some other colony; but
 " when the line was fixed of forty-five degrees,
 " the line itself was not drawn but only the point
 " settled from which it should be drawn. The
 " east line is actually drawn on the map; but
 " the line in the north-west part was left totally
 " undefined,—the point being fixed simply to the
 " head of Lake Champlain. The consequence
 " was that the whole west boundary of New-
 " York extending above two hundred miles, a
 " little more or less, including all the best settled
 " parts of that province and *inhabited by various per-*
 " *sons, civil and military, all this has been supposed to go*
 " *under that description to the Province of Quebec by the*
 " *provisions of this bill.* To those who objected to so
 " frightful a conclusion, it was said, it was in the
 " power of the Crown after this Act, to adjudge to
 " this Province what belonged to it on the other
 " side of the line. The first thing that occurred to
 " me after hearing this declaration was, that a
 " lawsuit would be the beginning of this happy
 " settlement.

" With very uneasy sensations on this head
 " I came down to the House. The noble Lord
 " showed me the amendment which by no means
 " relieved my apprehensions. The reason why I
 " feel so anxious is that the line proposed is not a
 " line of geographical distinction merely; it is not
 " a line between New-York and some other
 " english settlement; it is not a question whether,

„ you shall receive a more advantageous govern-
 “ ment upon the side of Connecticut or whether
 “ you are restrained on the side of New Jersey.
 “ In all these you find english laws. english cus-
 “ toms, english juries and english assemblies
 “ wherever you go. *But this is a line which is to*
 “ *separate a man from the right of an Englishman.*
 “ First, the clause provides nothing at all for the
 “ territorial jurisdiction of the province. The
 “ Crown has the power of carrying the greatest
 “ portion of the actually settled part of the Pro-
 “ vince of New York into Canada. It provides
 “ for individuals, that they may hold their pro-
 “ perty; *but they must hold it subject to the French*
 “ *judges, without the benefit of trial by jury.*”

EXPLANATIONS OF LORD NORTH.

“ Lord North spoke after Burke: (1) “ The
 “ objection I have is precisely what the honorable
 “ gentleman has mentioned. I am not clear whe-
 “ ther there are not upon the south-east part of
 “ the River St. Lawrence Canadian settlements. I
 “ have been informed there are. I am sure there
 “ are no New-York settlements in that part of
 “ the world. I think it more prudent to have
 “ the boundary line settled on the spot; *reserving*
 “ *in the act all those lands that have been granted under*
 “ *any authority to the old settlers.*”

PROTECTION OF NEW-YORK SETTLERS

“ I shall satisfy the noble lord, replied Burke
 “ that there is no inconvenience in the world in
 “ drawing this line; no injustice in the world to

[1] CAVENDISH. *Debates of the Canada Bill of 1774* p. 192.

" Canadians, more injustice in drawing an imagi-
 " nery line, that may involve the whole colony
 " of New-York in confusion. I should be extreme-
 " ly tender of the privilege of the subject ; and
 " therefore I would not disturb any man living in
 " his property. But the fact is, no man is injured
 " by what I propose ; but by what the noble lord
 " proposes, if Canada is in future to have bound-
 " aries determined by the choice of the Crown ;
 " the Crown is to have the power of putting a
 " great part of the subjects of England under
 " laws, which are not the laws of England.....
 " Upon the noble lord's proposition, half the colony
 " of New-York may be adjudged, and some of it
 " must be adjudged, to belong to the colony of
 " Canada. The fate of forty or fifty thousand souls
 " is involved in this question. At present the
 " colony of New-York is the crown's. The noble
 " lord may adjudge it to belong to Pennsylvania,
 " but he cannot deprive it of the laws of England.
 " Now, however, by an act of Parliament he is
 " going to do it. The Crown has the power, at a
 " stroke to reduce that country to slavery..... The
 " parties here are English liberty and French law ;
 " and *the whole province of New-York* further than it
 " is defined by actual bounds, *is in the power of the*
 " *Crown*, not to adjudicate but to grant and hand
 " over to the French. I do not suppose if the
 " Crown were under the necessity of adjudging,
 " that it would adjudge amiss ; but it is in the
 " power of the Crown to grant even its power of
 " adjudging. When put on the English side, they
 " are put in the power of the laws ; where put on

" the French side, they are put out of the power
" of the laws. "

Those citations are rather long; but it was necessary to give them in order to show that the proviso mentioned by Mr. Sellar applies purely and exclusively to those parts of the Province of New-York which the King might include in the Province of Quebec, and that it applies only to the inhabitants of the territory which might thus be annexed to the Province of Quebec, but not to non-disputed parts of that Province. On this point, there can be no doubt and it is only people who are in ignorance or in bad faith who would pretend the contrary.

SENSE OF SECTION VIII

As I have previously said, section VIII, on which Mr. Sellar founds his claim, is only the corollary of section II and was added only for the purpose of giving an assurance, to colonists of that part of the Province of New-York which might be annexed to that of Quebec, by the determining of the boundaries, that even if they became thereby inhabitants of the French province, they would still be governed by English law. Otherwise clause VII which assures to Catholics the free exercise of their religion and implies the existence of the parish system, would be void of sense. And at any rate, if the object of the bill had been to limit the application of French laws and customs to the seigniories, it would have said so in formal terms. But it does not so say, and attorney-general Thurlow as well as all who explained the tenor of the bill to the House of Commons,

state that it puts in force French law and customs in the whole extent of the Province, for the tenure of land as well as for all other purposes.

INTERPRETATION OF THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT

If there remain any doubts on this point, the proofs, which I will not cite, should make them entirely disappear and leave the question fully solved.

No one better knew the true meaning of the Act of 1774, as to the tenure of land, than the Imperial Government which had prepared and passed the Bill. In 1775, the Government revoked its previous instructions with regard to the concession of lands and gave other instructions to the colonial authorities, ordering that in the future all concessions of lands by the Crown should be made according to the seigniorial system, in fiefs and seigniories, that is to say according to French law; this clearly proves that the Act of 1774 applied French law and customs, the parish system like the rest, to all the Province without any reserve. On this point, we have the evidence of John Davidson, the Commissioner of Lands, who was thoroughly conversant with the question. In the course of the enquiry instituted by Lord Durham, on the land tenure in 1839, this is what Mr. Davidson said:

"From the acquisition of the Province in 1763 up to about 1775, land was granted under instructions from the Crown framed in England under location tickets in free and common saccage.....
"In 1775, these instructions appear to have been

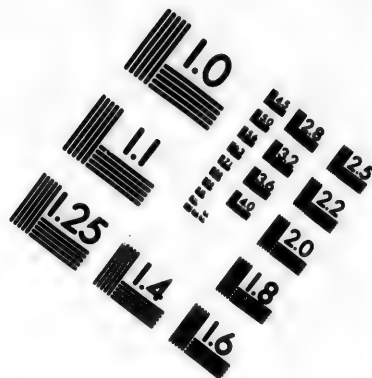
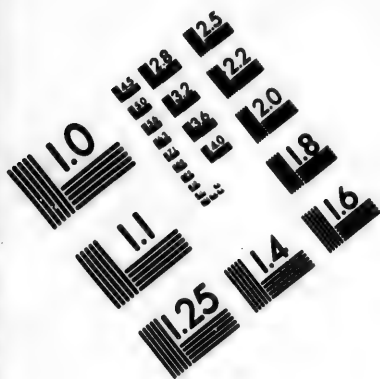
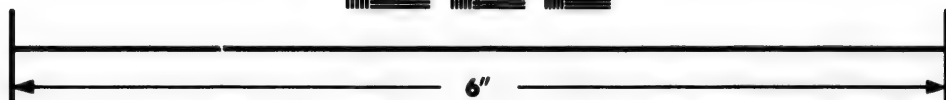
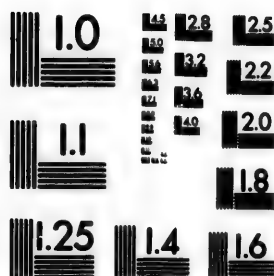


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" superseded by instructions from the Home Government, which directed that all lands then or thereafter to be subject to the disposal of the Crown, should be granted in fief and seignior, in like manner as was practised antecedent to the conquest but omitting any reservation of judicial powers. Under these instructions, three seigniories appear to have been granted. These instructions appear to have been modified in 1796, by instructions to Lord Dorchester, whereby it was ordered that grants should be made to immigrant U. E. Loyalist and to disbanded soldiers... These grants to be held under the Crown as seignior, and subject to all seignioral duties." (1)

Is this clear enough?

In the face of such testimony, what becomes of the pretensions of Mr. Sellar concerning lands situated outside of the seigniories and of the exclusion of the parish system from such lands by the Act of 1774. For an honest man, for a serious writer, the question is not open to discussion.

DECLARATION OF PITT

All this moreover is corroborated by the Act of 1791. As the English settlers were complaining of being subjected to French laws, in the Province of Quebec, the Imperial Government divided it into Upper and Lower Canada, for the special purpose of satisfying the English settlers, by giving them a Province where they would exclusively enjoy the benefit of English laws and institutions and also in order to preserve for the

(1) *Minutes of Evidence, Commission of Enquiry for Crown Lands, page 8*

French-Canadians the other part of the Province subject exclusively and without reserve to French laws and institutions. I will cite a few extracts from the explanations given by Pitt in laying the Bill before the House of Commons :

" It seemed to his Majesty's servants the most desirable thing, if they could not give satisfaction to all descriptions of men, to divide the Province, and to contrive that one division should consist, as much as possible, of these who were well inclined towards the English laws, and the other of those who were attached to the French laws. It was perfectly true that in Lower Canada, there still remained a number of English subjects; but these would hold a much smaller proportion than if there was one from of government for every part of the province. It was for Upper Canada particularly that they were to expect a great addition of English inhabitants. (1)..... The proclamation referred to was made in 1763; and by the act of 1774, all English laws had been abolished except the criminal law. (2).....

" At present the Canadians were in possession of the criminal law of England and the civil law in many respects, but not as to landed property..... It was intended to continue the laws now in force in Quebec..... (3) The Upper Canada being almost entirely peopled by emigrants from Great Britain or from America, the Protec-

[1] Parliamentary History of England vol. 22, column 402.

[2] Parliamentary History of England vol. 22, column 404.

[3] Parliamentary History of English, vol. 22, column 1876.

"tant religion would be the establishment, and
 "they would have the benefit of the English
 "tenure law (1)."

Fox expressed himself even in more positive terms:

"When the Province was divided it was
 "meant to leave the French laws in the one dis-
 "trict and the English laws in the other; the con-
 "sequence of which would be, that in Lower
 "Canada, which consisted principally of French
 "inhabitants, all the French laws would continue
 "in force till altered by the legislation of the
 "country. (2)

All this, it must be admitted, proves without any doubt that the Act of 1774 established French laws and the seigniorial tenure, in the whole extent of the territory of the Province of Quebec, without any reserve whatsoever.

Mr. Sellar cannot therefore make good his assertions about the Act of 1774, whose sense and bearing cannot leave any doubt. Can he rest his pretensions on the Act of 1791? Certainly not. This statute does not establish English law as the law of the land, as regards land tenure, but only renders its application permissible in the Province of Lower Canada. This is its text:

"..... and that in every case where lands
 "shall be hereafter granted within the said Pro-
 "vince of Lower Canada, and where the grantee
 "thereof shall desire the same to be granted in
 "free and common soccage, the same shall be so

[1] Parliamentary History of England. Vol. 22, column 1879.
 [2] Parliamentary Hist. of England, vol 22, column 405.

" granted ; but subject nevertheless to such alterations, etc. etc. 31 Geo. III (1791) c. 31, s. XLIII.

This is the only part of the Act of 1791 which introduces into Lower Canada English law as regards land tenure ; this provision does not cover any part of the Province in a special manner, it does not in the least affect the seigniorial tenure which applied to the whole territory ; it is not the law of the land, it is an exception to the law, for the benefit of those who might prefer the english tenure, in any part of the Province, even in the seigniories, in the event of the crown having lands therein to concede. But the Crown retained, in virtue of the Act of 1774, the right to concede all lands in fiefs and seigniories if it should think fit so to do.

ACT OF 1825

Mr. Sellar mentions in support of his proposition the statute of 1825—6 George IV., chapter 59.

What does this statute lay down relative to the question at hand ? Simply the application of English law relative to inheritances, mutations of property and dowers of women, as to properties held in free and common socage. If the Imperial Government desired to withdraw from the parish system the lands thus possessed, it would have inserted a provision in that sense in the statute, precisely as it did for these parts of the civil law which I have just mentioned.

USURPATION AT THE EXPENSE OF FRENCH-CANADIANS.

No, Mr. Sellar, there is not in the laws governing the Province of Quebec any provision removing any part of our Province from the parish system ; the introduction of this system into parts

of the Province situated outside of the seigniories is not a violation of the law nor a usurpation, it is the exercise of a right which has always belonged to Catholics, especially since 1774.

I will go further: relying on the law itself and on the interpretation and declarations of the most prominent public men of England I assert that if there be usurpation any where, it has been committed to the detriment of the French-Canadians and of the Catholics of the Province of Quebec. The Act of 1791 deprived us of the finest part of the territory which the Act of 1774 guaranteed to us, as a country where we could in full liberty enjoy our civil and religious institutions, our parish system as well as the rest. There were at that time in Upper Canada French-Canadians and Catholics who were deprived of the free exercise of their institutions, and if, in imitation of the evil example which you give us, we desired, as you and your friends, to rouse prejudices of race and religion, we could with every right claim, for the Catholics of Ontario, that which you urge upon the Equal Rights Association of Ontario to claim without right or reason for the Protestants of Quebec.

PROTECTIVE PROVISIONS

Thus, the parish system might be enforced in the whole Province of Quebec; but we have placed limits on this power by adopting, in favor of the Protestant minority, protective measures.

It is known that according to our laws, the territory erected into a parish by the civil authority in the seigniories, becomes thereby a municipal corporation.

The townships have been exempted from the above law by special provisions so as not to affect their municipal organization; the concurrence of the two thirds of the members of the county council is required for such a change. (See article 29 et seq. of the Municipal Code of the Province of Quebec.)

Here we see the careful attention which the majority of this Province displays in the exercise of its rights, in order not to hurt the feelings and susceptibilities of the minority.

And it is in presence of facts like these, that fanatics complain and insult us!

FINAL REMARKS

You will easily understand, Sir, that in the midst of the numerous and pressing occupations of a parliamentary session, it is impossible for me to prepare as complete a refutation, as would wish to make, of the errors, false representations and calumnies which go to make up Mr Sellar's pamphlet. I only have touched upon the most serious ones. My fellow countrymen understand it well and they are reasonable and just enough not to demand that I should further defend them; but they are requested to complete my work.

Incomplete as it may be, I trust that this refutation will show to the honest Protestants what they must think of the pamphlet which, has provoked it, and to the Equal Rights Association, the compromising position into which it has been placed by its fellow-laborer, M. Sellar.

HONORÉ MERCIER,
Prime-Minister.

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MR SELLAR'S REPLY.

TO DR CAVEN OF TORONTO :

SIR,—When, in compliance with the request of the executive committee of the Equal Rights association, of which you are president, I sent the first of a series of letters describing the position of the English minority in the Province of Quebec, I little dreamt that it would bring upon you the charge of having issued “a tissue of errors as to facts, history, and appreciation.” When such a charge is brought by no less a personage than the Premier of Quebec in his official capacity, I realize the painful situation in which you, as a just and truthful man, are placed, and hasten to relieve you by supplying proof that you are not guilty of fanning prejudices against the French and Catholics of Quebec by publishing a tissue of falsehoods. In doing so, I wish it understood that I will confine myself to the charges that apply to the pamphlet. Mr Mercier indulges in many digressions, drags in subjects the pamphlet does not mention, imputes to it statements it does not contain, and which he proceeds to gravely refute. In this I will not follow him, for these digressions, as every reader of the pamphlet will see, find no occasion in it.

THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH.

Mr Mercier devotes most space to criticism of the statements relative to the strength and wealth of the Church of Rome in Quebec. He ridicules the assertion that its priests and religieuses number 8000. That is a question of fact that can be decisively settled by appeal to the chief authority on the subject, "Le Canada Ecclesiastique," the year-book of the Roman Catholic church. It gives the number of parish priests at 1556, regular clergy in orders 1267, and members of female communities 4723. The book says the returns are incomplete, and, as several new orders were not included, the estimate of 8000 is within the mark. Mr Mercier asserts I include among the clergy all members of religious orders and grows humorous (pp. 33 & 38) over his misstatement of my words. I did not class members of brotherhoods and sisterhoods as clergy. What I did say was, that they are equally dependent with the priests upon their church for their daily bread, and that is a self-evident truth. The figures show that every 150 Catholics in the province have to provide for the maintenance of one in orders. My estimate that, indirectly, other 12,000 are dependent upon the church for a living is also denied. A little reflection, counting from the lawyer and notary retained by each Order down to the habitant who caters for the kitchen, will show that 12,000 is an under-estimate, even if the politicians and journalists, who live by subserviency to the priesthood, are excluded.

Exception is taken to the statement as to the

wealth of the Church of Rome. Mr Mercier's words are :

As a church the Church of Rome does not own an inch of land in the Province of Quebec. I defy Mr Sellar to prove the contrary. p. 30.

This is mere juggling with words. That in the registry books the name, "The Church of Rome," does not appear, I know full well, but is it not substantially the same that the names of 15 male communities, 27 female communities, and numberless parochial fabriques are there set down? So long as land is held in the interest of, controlled, and applied solely to the purposes of the church, what signifies whose name appears as owner? That there is no corporation known to the Crown Lands department as the Church of Rome does not change the fact that a wide extent of territory is owned for its benefit. Mr Mercier says only 20,000 acres are so held. What has become of the seigniories upon which Mount Royal casts its shadow, of the seigniories of Two Mountains, Chateauguay and Neuville? What of these and many more? Have they melted into thin air? The fact is, that the church draws revenue from fully one million acres, and Mr Mercier knows it. (P. 61). He then goes into an elaborate calculation as to the revenue of the priests, the amount they realize from tithes and the casuel, and dilates upon the labors of the nuns. As the pamphlet does not touch upon those subjects, I am not called upon to follow him, but I take the liberty of appending a few extracts from the public accounts which add

facts which Mr Mercier does not mention, and which it is well you should know.

Just as he equivocates over the Church of Rome not owning an inch of land in the Province of Quebec, Mr Mercier evades the assertion of the pamphlet that her lands are placed outside the jurisdiction of the laws governing real estate. Not so, he exclaims, the title deeds are subject to articles 3443, 3444, and 3450—that is, registration and the usual formalities have to be complied with. What has that to do with their being held in mortmain—placed in a dead hand that seldom lets go what it clutches? Ah, but, Mr Mercier cries, why condemn mortmain, it applies also to the lands owned by the Protestant churches. That does not affect my statement that the Church of Rome so holds her land. That the privilege is open to the Protestant churches does not justify the law, and I am not aware of any of the reformed churches availing themselves of it.

In like manner he treats the statement that the property of the church is exempt from taxation, and quotes article 712 of the Municipal Code. As everybody knows, the interpretation of that article has been disputed by ecclesiastical corporations, even to the extent of refusing to pay for improvements, such as drainage, that enhanced the value of their property. Mr Mercier adds that on the stores and houses owned by them, the nuns pay taxes. I have been under the impression and am still, that the occupants of those warehouses, who are chiefly Protestants, pay the taxes and that the

nuns pocket the rents. I have yet to learn that the company of St Sulpice, the Quebec seminary, the congregation of Notre Dame, or any other of the great ecclesiastical corporations pay a dollar of direct tax.

THE PARISH SYSTEM.

Mr Mercier states that I carp at the parochial system without the slightest regard for truth, and proceeds to attribute to me statements not to be found in the pamphlet and which he proceeds to laboriously answer. His quotation of the law, that the erection of parishes and the building of churches and presbyteries are placed under the control of the parishioners, goes for nothing. The residents of this province are familiar with such projects when first proposed being opposed by a majority of the parishioners yet ultimately carried out, and you in Ontario, by what has passed with regard to the operation of the separate school act, have some idea of the potency of that law which stands behind the laws of the land—the law of anathema. Mr Mercier says the “so-called domination of the Catholic clergy exists only in the too vivid imagination of the Gleaner writer,” and then further on (p. 34) he exultingly boasts that the Catholics “who inhabit Quebec are obliged, in religious matters, to absolute obedience to the Church of Rome.” Unwittingly Mr Mercier, by this admission, confirms more than I alleged.

I heartily wish his denial of the statement, that the building of churches has compelled habitants to sell out, was true. There is hardly a parish in

the province where a new church has been built in which you will not learn of poor men who have had to sell their farms from inability to pay the mortgage upon which they raised the money to meet their assessments.

THE COLLECTION OF TITHES.

If the Church of Rome in Quebec chooses to have the parochial system accompanied by tithes and by taxes to build and maintain churches and presbyteries, no outsider can object. That is a matter affecting its members alone. But when that church goes beyond that, and demands that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-council shall put in force the decrees of her bishops establishing parishes and that the courts shall undertake the collection of the tithes and taxes imposed, a new phase is presented, for the concurrence of those who are not Catholics is thereby demanded to support Roman Catholicism. For instance: when a habitant says, "I am willing to give every twenty-sixth bushel of my grain to the priest," nobody has a right to interfere, but when the priest comes and says, "I have asked this habitant to give me each 26th bushel of his grain and he refuses: I demand that the civil magistrate issue a summons to compel him, and, if need be, that an execution in the name of the Queen be issued to collect the amount off his property," the question assumes an entirely different aspect, for it ceases to be one solely affecting the priest and the habitant. A third party is brought in, namely the State. Protestants are equally with Catholics partners in the State, therefore have

the right to say for what purposes the power and machinery of the State shall be used. Non-Catholics have no right to say that the parish system with its dues shall cease, but they have a right to say that the State shall not lend its aid to maintain that system or to collect its dues. That the power of the State should continue to be so used, is not a question of expediency with Protestants. To use the State for purposes repugnant to the moral sense of Protestants, is a violation of their rights of conscience, for they are thereby brought in to help to keep up a church against whose teaching they protest. Let me suppose a case. We see every summer a number of Jews, fleeing from the persecutions of the despots of the continent of Europe, seeking homes in our Northwest. It is within the realm of possibility that these Jews may come to form a majority of the population of one of those provinces into which the Northwest will be divided. When that comes to pass, they may induce its legislature to pass an act authorizing the levying of taxes on real estate for the support of their religious observances. Would Mr Mercier let such an act come into force under the pretence that it affected Jews alone? Would he not urge that, by employing the agency and power of the State to collect that tax, it ceased to be a law solely affecting Jews and therefore involved every subject of the Dominion? Would he not, as a Christian, zealous for the honor of the founder of Christianity, boldly declare he could not consent to becoming a party, even indirectly, to the main-

tenance of a creed he protested against, and therefore would demand that the federal government disallow the act? In like manner, we Protestants of Quebec ask that the Dominion government lift from us this parish system, as being a burden upon our consciences.

I wish to be clearly understood upon this important point. It is not tithes or fabrique assessments, or canonical parishes I oppose. My protest is against the government and courts being used to compulsorily put them into force. For saying so Mr Mercier alleges that "Mr Sellar becomes the apostle of irreligion, apostacy, and even atheism." I have always understood that religion was a matter of conscience, so that, when a man failed to voluntarily respond to her claims, it was an outrage to use the civil power to constrain him. Mr Mercier thinks otherwise; the Catholic who refuses to submit to ecclesiastical authority he would hand over to the civil authority. The State, even in such a miserable task as the collection of a tax of grain off poor habitants, is to be the servant of the Church of Rome, and its executive is to be used in carrying out the decrees of her bishops. Such is the doctrine proclaimed by the premier of a British province in this nineteenth century. As a Protestant, I denounce the doctrine as an invasion of my rights of conscience; as a British subject, I resent it as an invasion of my birthright.

Mr Mercier says: "The Catholic who, eaten up by avarice, would prefer his money to his religion need only apostatize to free himself." Mark that

word apostatize. Mr Mercier, to whom the interests of over 200,000 non-Catholics are confided; Mr Mercier, who when it suits his purpose, has so many honeyed words for Protestants, here shows that in his heart he believes we are all apostates, and, if he dared, would treat us as such. Surely, Dr Caven, when the objection is urged against the Board of French Evangelization that it has such small results to point to, you will comprehend the difficulties converts have in remaining in this province, when its Premier arraigns them as apostates.

In defence of the tithe system, Mr Mercier urges that the United Kingdom is subject to it. Two wrongs do not make a right. Tithes there are a survival of the ante-Reformation period, and the day is not far distant when this last vestige of that time, different in form from tithes here, shall be rooted out in England and Scotland, as it has already been in Ireland.

THE EXODUS OF ENGLISH FARMERS.

The statement of the pamphlet, that the exodus of Protestants from the Townships is due to the operation of the parochial system, Mr Mercier denies, and says it is to be attributed to "a longing for Manitoba and Minnesota lands that has seized upon Protestant farmers." Land, as farming is practised among us, will not meet the requirements of the natural increase of population, so that, of necessity, there is an emigration from the older settlements, the young men seeking in the West the farms they cannot obtain near their

birthplace. That normal and necessary emigration is not to be confounded, however, with the movement of an entire population. There is emigration from Ontario, yet its population remains substantially the same. The emigration from the Townships is the squeezing out of the English-speaking farmers that French may be put in their place. Mr Mercier is perfectly cognizant of all that is being done in that way; of the agencies at work and the countenance given by his government. His deputy minister, Father Labelle, knows of them, and the organ of the clergy, *La Verite*, knows of them, for it boasts:

Have we not wrought harvests of resistance and of peaceful conquest in the Eastern Townships? Have we not absorbed many of the English and Scotch settlements, planted among us in order to break up our homogeneity?

Not two years ago, a Nationalist organ, *Le Progres de Valleyfield*, boasted that within 20 years Huntingdon, the county in which I live, would be as French as Beauharnois. Mr Mercier knows, as every other public man knows, that the emigration from the Townships is not of the healthy nature of hives casting off new swarms. It is the extinction of the hives themselves.

THE SETTING UP OF THE PARISH SYSTEM IN THE TOWNSHIPS A USURPATION.

To the contention of the pamphlet that the extension of the parish system is unjustifiable, Mr Mercier says:

No, Mr Sellar, there is not in the laws governing

the province of Quebec any provision removing any part of our province from the parish system; the introduction of this system into parts of the province situated outside of the seigniories is not a violation of the law nor a usurpation; it is the exercise of a right which has belonged to Catholics, especially since 1774. p. 83.

At this conclusion he arrives by asserting that the section I quoted from the Canada act applies not to the sections restoring French law and to the priesthood their dues, but to the section defining the boundaries of the new territory organized by the act. He goes on to inform us that there was doubt as to the southern boundary, and that the section was inserted to prevent any part of New York State being included. Now, if this theory be correct it will conform with three points, with the act itself, with the country it was designed for, with its operation by the officials to whom it was entrusted. I take the last first. Lord Dorchester was the second governor appointed under the act, and found that the settlements in the Bay of Quinte and Niagara districts had grown to such an extent that it was necessary they should have provision made for the administration of law. Mr Mercier says:

The boundaries given to the province of Quebec by act of 1774 comprised all our present territory, all the territory of the province of Ontario, Michigan, Wisconsin and even a part of Illinois, as they extended to the Ohio and Mississippi. In all that immense territory it was French law which was to prevail to the exclusion of English law, except as to criminal law and some other parts of English

law. The text of the statute is positive on this point. p. 69.

Very well, if that was the positive requirement of the statute, Lord Dorchester must needs establish French law in the U. E. Loyalist settlements. Now, what do we find he did? He issued a proclamation from Quebec establishing the province of Upper Canada and declaring that English law was to prevail. Dared he have done that had the Canada act prescribed, as Mr Mercier declares it prescribed, that French law should prevail, not only in the seigniories, but over the territory that spread between them and the Mississippi?

Then as to the country it was designed for. Mr Mercier writes:

The difficulty was to ascertain if the southern boundary, as defined in the bill, did not encroach on the territory of the province of New York and if it were not of such a nature as to affect the rights of the inhabitants of that colony, who possessed lands under English tenure and were governed by the law of England. p. 71.

The only portion of New York State that could possibly be affected was that along the 45th parallel. In 1774 that section of country, from Lake Champlain to St Regis, had not a single white inhabitant. Mr Mercier's "inhabitants" are myths.

Now as to the act itself. Mr Mercier says the section I quoted was inserted to prevent the settlers on the border of New York State from being included in the new territory. If that was so, would not the section have been bracketed with that defining the boundaries? It was not. It is

coupled with the two sections restoring French law and the parish system, and thus palpably qualifies them. I am sorry to say, as if to make it suit his theory, Mr Mercier misquotes the section, which should read :

Provided always that nothing in this act contained shall extend or be construed to extend to any lands that have been granted by His Majesty, *or shall hereafter be granted by His Majesty*, his heirs and successors, to be holden in free and common soccage.

The words in italics Mr Mercier leaves out, and these words prove beyond cavil that the intent of the act was that the two sections relative to French law and the parish system were not to apply to lands held in free and common soccage.

Mr Burke is quoted by Mr Mercier in support of his ingenious theory, who says he gave a clear explanation of section 9. Mr Mercier has only forgotten three circumstances : that Mr Burke sat on the Opposition benches, and it is not the part of a member in opposition to give an explanation of a ministerial measure; that when he spoke the House was in committee on the bill; and thirdly, that the section before it, when Mr Burke made the remarks quoted, was number 2, the section in question, number 9, not being reached until the following day. Were that distinguished Irishman now living, I can conceive the indignation with which he would regard his words being made to apply to justifying the depriving of free-born Britons of their rights and the vehemence with which he would plead their cause.

Mr Mercier states (p. 84) that the parish system might be enforced in the whole of Quebec but it has been limited in favor of the Protestant minority. One of these limitations he tells you is requiring the concurrence of two-thirds of the county council to change a canonical parish outside the seigniories into a municipal one. This does not agree with what has been done. In the case of Ste Barbe a municipal parish was created out of non-tief land by the decree of the bishop and against the united protest of the county council. This is a sample of the "careful attention which the majority displays in the exercise of its rights, in order not to hurt the feelings and susceptibilities of the minority." In the Ste Barbe case there was a note of warning to Ontario, for what was done in our supposed free township lands of Quebec may be done in your province. Mr Mercier asserts (p. 84) that the French Canadians and Catholics of Quebec could, with every right, claim the revival of the parish system and the privileges that accompany it in Ontario. The founders of our townships would have treated the assertion as incredible that the day should come when they would be subject to the old French law and usage. Such of the people of Ontario as flout the like happening to their province, I ask to look to what is taking place in their counties bordering the Ottawa. The pretensions of the majority in Quebec is the measure of their designs. Movements so insignificant that the people of Ontario pass as not requiring attention, a succeeding generation

will be unable to withstand. The thin walls of sand and clay which you see today rising in your eastern and northern townships will be found to be adamant tomorrow, unless the people of Ontario awake and prevent the morrow finding them in existence.

I might rest here, for I think I have taken up the main objections Mr Mercier has made to the statements contained in the pamphlet, but the point, whether or not

THE TOWNSHIPS ARE FREE SOIL,

is so important that I wish to make the evidence in support of it overwhelming. Seventy years ago the British parliament began to be pestered with petitions and complaints of the state of affairs in the province of Quebec and finally appointed a select committee to take evidence and report as to what ought to be done. The Quebec assembly deputed Viger and Neilson to represent the French interest. Before the committee considerable evidence was taken on this very point, whether the act of 1774 applied French law to the townships in the province of Quebec. When all the witnesses had been heard, the committee prepared its report, and this is what it laid down :

To the provision in the act of 1774, providing 'that in all matters of controversy relating to property and civil rights . . . be determined agreeably to the laws and customs of Lower Canada,' there is a marked exception to this concession of French law, namely, 'that it shall not apply to lands which

had been or should be granted in free and common soccage.'—(Report of select committee, 1828.)

No talk here of the section applying to New York State; the committee apply it without hesitation to the lands granted in free and common soccage in the province of Quebec. Nor could the committee have given other deliverance than that the lands outside the seigniories were to be free from French law, for it had before it incontrovertible proof that English law had prevailed from their first settlement. Among others, the Hon J. W. Horton, one of the earliest and most distinguished settlers of the Eastern Townships, declared under oath, that by virtue of the proclamation of George III. in 1763, inviting settlers to Canada under the assurance that they "may confide in our royal protection for the enjoyment of the benefit of the laws of our realm of England," English law had been in force, and then he added significantly, "so far as the Townships, that has never been repealed." The report of the committee was accepted by the House, and therefore its interpretation of the Canada act must be accepted as final.

Let me call another witness. If the province of Quebec ever had a man who thoroughly understood its customs, history, and laws, it was the late Judge McCord. He was a life-long resident; he had seen the Townships in their infancy and lived to see them in their maturity, yet he had had equal facilities for becoming familiar with the seigniories, from having been associated in the management of one. In a case brought before him,

involving the right to collect tithes off free and common soccage land, he gave his judgment in these memorable words:

Lands held in free and common soccage, being subject to the laws of England, are not subject to tithes.—(Montreal Condensed Reports, p. 126).

That was as late as 1852, and there is not a lawyer in the Eastern Townships whose experience goes back half a century who will not testify that until, as described in the pamphlet, an insidious undermining of English institutions was begun, the law in the townships was substantially English law and a few fragments yet survive, as the privilege of making deeds before witnesses.

Mr Mercier tells me three seigniories were erected by the English Crown. I know their history and can tell him the trouble that afterwards arose in deciding the nature of their tenure, and I can also tell him of the curious experiments to introduce the manor system of England, but these vagaries of governors, in their desire to induce the settlement of the province, tell neither one way nor the other on the point under dispute. He also denies my application of the Quebec Tenures act, declaring it had nothing to do with tenures, that it was simply a law regulating inheritance, mutations and dower. If he will not accept the evidence of the act itself, perhaps he will that of a bitter opponent of it, D. B. Viger:

It (the tenures act) caused the greatest discontent because it destroyed at once the system (the seigniorial) we considered extended to the whole province.

THE GIST OF THE MATTER.

What is Mr Mercier aiming at throughout his letter? What the unspoken pretension he tries in a roundabout way to establish? Is it not, that Canadians of French origin are superior to Canadians of other descent, in having legal privileges in which none other shares? Is not the gist of all he says simply this: French Canadians are not as Irish, English or Scotch Canadians, for they have rights peculiar to themselves and with their exercise of these rights other Canadians have no business: if English-speaking people or non-Catholics will live in Quebec, they must submit to the effects of these privileges; to claim that they are illegal or unconstitutional is absurd—a claim that only bigots or ignorant persons would set up. Is that not the drift of every page in Mr Mercier's letter? If it is not, what can he mean by asserting that French law and Catholic supremacy are inalienable in the province of Quebec, and by his violent denunciation of all I urged in favor of equal rights and British law? Now, such a position to be taken by the premier of Quebec is a serious matter. It is of gravest import to the minority resident in Quebec, for it denies them the rights and privileges of British subjects. To them it means that they shall be subject to French law and to Papal authority. Every one of my appeals to history, law, and the constitution, that British subjects living in Quebec are entitled to British rights and privileges he meets with flouts and jeers, and positively asserts in

boldest terms that the parish system, and all that system involves, applies to every acre of Quebec. That I am a British subject, that over me the British ensign floats, that the representative of the Empire's sovereign sits at Ottawa, goes for nothing in my claim that French law and Papal power are usurpations in Quebec. Whoever seek proof of the nature of the claims of the Nationalists, and to know the spirit with which they meet those who deny these claims, need not go beyond this letter of Mr Mercier.

It is a mistake to conclude that these Nationalist pretensions affect Quebec alone: they are of moment to all, even to the dwellers in the remotest provinces of the Dominion. What is the wish of every true Canadian? Is it not to build up Canada as a great nation—independent in will, yet of free choice allied with the British empire and forming an integral part, a powerful member, of that empire? How can this noble purpose be realized if Canada not merely continues to allow to exist but fosters, extends and consolidates, within her borders, claims and pretensions distinctly antagonistic? Can Canada become strong and united if it be accepted that a section of her people, because of their origin, creed and language, have other privileges than those who are not of them—a caste to exact separate laws and treatment from parliament and legislature, whether they live by the St Lawrence or the Saskatchewan? Is it possible for Canada to take the high place in the world that nature and providence have placed in

her reach, if she allows herself to be shackled by a hostile element within her, which jealously thwarts every movement towards attaining her high destiny? In brief, is it possible for Canada to become a nation, if there is to be a nation within her, especially when that subsidiary nation is incongruous and antagonistic? If Canada is to become what she ought to be, it is indispensable that her people shall stand upon an equality, none claiming superiority over the other, and all subject to the same law and to the same administration of it. The French Canadian is entitled to all the rights of a British subject and to no more. When he sets up the pretence that because he is French and Catholic he may claim privileges beyond those of the Englishman and the Protestant, loyalty to the Empire and the instinct of self-preservation incite the patriot to deal with the claim as treason against Canada. Surely the day is nigh when public sentiment will make itself felt at Ottawa, and parliament shall cease to draw distinctions between Frenchmen and Englishmen, Protestants and Catholics, recognize all as Canadians, and legislate for them as such and such alone.

I would not have it understood that the pretensions set forth by Mr Mercier are supported by the French Canadians as a body. Left to themselves they would live amicably with their neighbors and on the same footing. The demands of Nationalists and Ultramontanes come from men who have either a pecuniary interest in perpetuating connection between church and state or whose only hope of

political preferment lies in exacting it on the score of their representing a class. Professional politicians in every country are a despicable body of men, but those of Quebec are peculiarly so, for to advance themselves they fan the lowest prejudices of race and make appeals to religious sentiments which their lives belie.

The clergy and politicians have brought about a state of affairs full of menace to the peace and future standing of Canada. They endeavor to establish that Quebec is peculiar among the other provinces of the Dominion in having secured to it exceptional privileges: that it was set aside by statute and ordinance of the British parliament as a preserve for French law and custom and for the Church of Rome. That is the issue to be faced, and however party politicians may try to avoid it, there is no escape,—it must before long be decided. Mr Mercier argues that the majority are buttressed by statutes and prescriptive titles in their design to complete the autonomy of Quebec as French and Catholic. On behalf of the minority, I have endeavored to show that their claim is unfounded, and that all they have accomplished is of the nature of outrage and usurpation. Should the Dominion deem it a matter of no consequence that a large and populous province, which controls the gateway to the Atlantic, become alien and hostile to British interests, the minority can do nothing, for they are weak, scattered and divided. A stroke of King George's pen would have averted the American revolution; the rejection of

the concessions in the act of 1774 would have prevented the difficulties that now perplex us; upon how the electors of the Dominion deal with the pretensions of the party Mr Mercier represents the future of our country depends.

At the risk of being tiresome, I repeat that the Quebec question is not a local, not a provincial one, but affects the entire Dominion, for just so far as the Nationalists succeed will the hopes of those who are laboring to mould the inhabitants of Canada into one people and to establish a common nationality be defeated. There are two essentials to the unity of Canada.

First, we cannot build on the base of church and state. The Dominion is made up of men who differ in their religious views, and we can live in peace and work together in no other way than by mutually agreeing that religion shall be confined to the individual and the family, and that the state shall do justice to all forms of creeds by leaving all severely alone. Mr Mercier says church and state are compatible, and quotes Mgr. Cavagnis. Why take the testimony of a servant when that of the head is available? What say the Syllabus of Pius IX. and the Vatican Decrees? That the civil power has no authority to define what are the limits within which the church may exercise authority, and that the domain of the church is that of faith and morals—a domain so wide, as Mr Gladstone has pointed out, that every act of the state may be brought within it. And has not the experience of every province in the Dominion, and especially

that of Quebec, been that whenever the state travelled out of her sphere to favor any church, trouble and heart-burnings have arisen? The electors of Ontario are now agitated over whether they shall conserve the principle of separate schools. If they do they will learn, as the minority in Quebec has done, that fresh demands are based on each concession, that if separate schools are granted, separate institutions for the deaf and dumb, the blind, the helpless, the insane, and even separate prisons, will follow in time, until a partition wall between Catholic and non-Catholic will be found at every turn—partition-walls reared and maintained at the expense of the State. Once admit the principle that any class in the community, because of certain theological views they hold, are entitled to exceptional treatment by the State, are not to sit at the common-board and eat out of the same dish but to have a separate table for themselves, and a free and united Canada becomes an impossibility.

Second, we must build on the base of a common citizenship. If we are to be classified according to origin, if we are to have a little Scotland, a little Ireland, a little England, a little France, then the Dominion is doomed to failure. It can only become great by our individual nationalities being absorbed in the common nationality of being Canadian and recognizing that our first and last duty is to the land we live in and live by. The Frenchman has no greater rights than the Englishman, and the Englishman no greater than the Frenchman. For any body of men to claim ex-

clusive rights and privileges on account of their origin is to introduce distinctions as incompatible with the peace of Canada as they are with its unity. Those men, therefore, who seek to establish that in the province of Quebec the French have privileges above and beyond its English inhabitants, and who are laboring to found a French nation on the banks of the St Lawrence, are to be regarded as enemies of the common weal and to be treated as traitors to Canada's claim upon their undivided allegiance. And that Canada is worthy of the undivided allegiance of her sons I will, despite all Mr Mercier's pretensions, continue to maintain, as I will work, however feebly, to bring about that time when origin and creed shall cease to be elements in our political life and we shall all stand side by side as brothers, knowing no other name than Canadian, no other country than Canada.

The movement of which you, Dr Caven, are the head, is the hope of Canada, and I recognize the patriotism that induced you to leave your scholarly retirement and, entering the noisy arena of politics, strive to establish the government of our loved land on the impregnable rock of Equal Rights. To doubt the ultimate success of the cause you represent would be to doubt that the destinies of the world are shaped by Him before whom we bow.

I have not referred to Mr Mercier's frequent statements regarding myself, and that I do so now arises from my fear that, not knowing me, you

may give his assertions more or less credit. He represents me as a rabid fanatic, a hater of everything French and Catholic, an ignoramus, a liar, and as a man whose social and commercial standing is contemptible. So far from being a fanatic, I have always been of the mind that polemic disputation, denunciation, railing and reviling are incompatible with the spirit of Christianity, so that in the newspaper I control the doctrines, the theology, of the Church of Rome have been scrupulously avoided. My sole offence is that I have been outspoken when that church has gone beyond her limits to make aggressions upon the rights of conscience of those outside her communion, and in opposing such of her people as claim to have privileges beyond those pertaining to them as British subjects. As to my circumstances and station in life, I fail to see what they have to do with the pamphlet Mr Mercier denounces. The humblest elector, even a country printer, has surely a right to a voice in the government of his country, and what I have written I ask to be judged upon its own merits, without regard to my character or station in life.

I shall be gratified if, after reading this letter, you can assure me it has removed all doubt from your mind as to the propriety of having placed the imprimatur of the Equal Rights Association upon the pamphlet Mr Mercier so unreservedly condemns. If you cannot conscientiously do that, I ask that you publicly renounce and disavow any connection with the pamphlet, and so let the entire accountability fall upon my shoulders.

ROBERT SELLAR.

Huntingdon, Que., May 28, 1890.

NOTES ON MR MERCIER'S ANSWER.

It is, thanks to the generosity of the clergy, that are founded and maintained the numerous institutions of charity—asylums, refuges and hospitals, and institutions of public instruction—which are seen all over our province.
—Mr Mercier, page 37.

The public accounts show that one-sixth of the revenue of the province of Quebec goes yearly to those very institutions which Mr Mercier here declares “are founded and maintained” by the clergy. The blue books for 1890 show that the following grants of public money were made to educational institutions in which the teaching is distinctively Roman Catholic or to heads of religious corporations towards the support of institutions under their charge:

TO ASSIST IN BUILDING

College at St Barthelmi.....	\$ 200
Convent de la Congregation Notre Dame, Berthier.....	150
Sœurs des Petites Ecoles, Rimouski.....	200
College at St Remi.....	500
Orphelinat de Marieville, Rouville.....	200
Asylum at St Henri.....	200
L'Ecole Industrielle, Joliette.....	200
Academy at Beauharnois.....	200
College at Roxton.....	200
Sœurs Marianistes de Ste Croix, Magog.....	500
Convent at St Cyprien.....	500
Convent de Jesus-Marie, Trois Pistoles.....	250
Convent du Bon Pasteur.....	200
College at Joliette.....	2000
Convent at Roxton.....	200
Freres Maristes, Upton.....	200
College at Varennes.....	2000
College at Chicoutimi.....	1000
Les Clercs de St Viateur, college at Berthier.....	250
College at St Vincent de Paul.....	500
Convent du Bon Pasteur, Quebec.....	1000

Convent St Felix du Cap Rouge.....	500
College at St Cuthbert.....	1000
Ecole des Freres de Sauveur, at Quebec.....	2000
Ecole des Freres at St Roch.....	2000
Reformatory at Pointe aux Esquimaux.....	750
College at Arthabaskaville.....	250
Convent at St Jean de Matha.....	400
Convent at L'Assomption.....	250
College at St Michel de Bellechasse.....	150
College at St Denis.....	300
Academy at St Patrice de Rawdon.....	500
Convent Ursulines, Roberval.....	1250
Ecole des Freres, de l'Islet.....	300
College St Joseph de Levis.....	250
Convent de Ste Croix.....	500
Petits Freres Maristes d'Iberville.....	500
Convent of St Michel de Bellechasse.....	150
College at Boucherville.....	500
Convent do	500
School at Laurentides.....	500
Convent de Celestin.....	250
Academy at Pointe Claire.....	1000
College St Bernardin, Waterloo.....	250
Hospital at Fraserville.....	500
Hospital at Temiscaming.....	500
Hotel Dieu, St Hyacinthe.....	500
Hospital of Grey Nuns, St Jerome.....	500
Hospital Richelieu.....	1000
Refuge at St Cunegonde.....	500
Hospital Sœurs de la Providence, L'Assomption	500
Convent of les Sœurs de Sainte Anne, Kildare...	200
	<hr/>
	\$28,900

CHARITY.

St Patrick's Hospital, Montreal.....	1120
Sœurs de la Providence, Montreal.....	784
St Vincent de Paul Asylum, Montreal.....	420
St Patrick's Orphan Asylum, Montreal.....	448
Magdalen Asylum, (Bon Pasteur), Montreal.....	504
Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum, Montreal.....	224
Sœurs de la Charité, Montreal.....	560
do do for their foundling hospital	140
Lying in Hospital, care Sœurs de la Miséricorde, Montreal	511

Bonaventure Street Asylum, Montreal.....	\$ 301
Nazareth Asylum for destitute children, Montreal.....	280
School for the blind, Nazareth Asylum, Montreal.....	1390
Work-room for the blind do do.....	300
St Bridget's Asylum, Montreal.....	560
Frères de la Charité de St Vincent de Paul, Mon- treal.....	850
Hospice de Bethléem, Montreal.....	350
Hospice de St Joseph du Bon Pasteur, Montreal.....	140
Petites Sœurs des Pauvres, Montreal.....	70
Notre Dame Hospital, Montreal.....	5000
Hotel Dieu, Montreal.....	1400
Hospice St Charles, Montreal.....	350
Charitable Ladies' Association of the Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum and Nazareth Asylum, Quebec.....	798
Asylum of the Good Shepherd, Quebec.....	660
Dispensary, Quebec.....	140
Sisters of Charity, for widows and infirm per- sons, Quebec.....	280
Hôpital du Sacré Cœur de Jesus, Quebec.....	700
do do do Dispensary, Quebec.....	140
do do Lying in Hospital, Quebec.....	140
Lying in Hospital, care of the Ladies of the Good Shepherd, Quebec.....	1659
Indigent Sick, Asile de la Providence, Three Rivers.....	1750
Sœurs de la Charité, for their Lying in Hospital, Three Rivers.....	280
General Hospital, Sorel.....	490
St Hyacinthe Hospital, St Hyacinthe.....	350
Orphan Asylum, St Hyacinthe.....	140
Ouvroir de St Hyacinthe, St Hyacinthe.....	140
Hotel Dieu, Nicolet.....	200
Hospice Youville, St Benoit.....	140
Asile de la Providence, Coteau du Lac.....	210
Hospice St Joseph, Beauharnois.....	140
Hospice Ste Marie, Ste Marie de Monnoir.....	140
Asile de la Providence, Mascouche.....	140
Hôpital St Jean, St Johns.....	140
Sisters of Charity, do.....	140
Hospice La Jemmerais, Varennes.....	140
Hospice des Sœurs de la Providence, St Vincent de Paul.....	140

Hôpital de la Providence, Joliette.....	\$140
Hospice de Laprairie, Laprairie.....	200
Hôpital St Joseph, Chambly.....	140
Nazareth Asylum (Salle d'asile des petits enfants), Chambly.....	70
Asile de la Providence, Ste Elizabeth.....	140
Sœurs de la Providence, N.-D. de L'Assomption..	140
Asile de la Providence, Ste Ursule.....	140
Hôpital de Ste Anne de Lapocatière, Ste Anne..	140
Sœurs de la Charité, Rimouski.....	350
Hôpital de St Ferdinand d'Halifax, St Ferdinand	140
Sherbrooke Hospital and Orphan Asylum, Sherbrooke.....	350
Hospice de Yamachiche, Yamachiche.....	140
Sœurs de la Charité, Lanoraie.....	140
Hôpital St Paulin, St Paulin.....	140
Hôpital de Longueuil, Longueuil.....	140
Nazareth Asylum (Salle d'asile des petits enfants), Longueuil.....	70
Hôpital de St François du Lac, St François.....	140
Hôpital St Louis, St Denis.....	140
Sœurs Grises de Farnham, Farnham.....	140
Hôpital de St Joseph de la Deliverance, Levis...	210
Hotel Dieu St Valier, Chicoutimi.....	140
Hotel Dieu d'Arthabaskaville, Arthabaskaville.	250
Hôpital du Sacré-Cœur, Quebec.....	430
Hospital Bay St Paul.....	250
Convent at Carleton.....	100

27,779

REFORMATORY INSTITUTIONS.

Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Montreal.....	\$30,829
Brothers of Charity, Montreal.....	37,396
Sisters of The Good Shepherd, Quebec	7,091
Sisters of Charity, Levis.....	20,980
Sisters of Charity, Pointe-aux-Esquimaux.....	2,289
Orphanage Notre Dame de Montfort	3,970
	<hr/> 102,555

LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

Sisters of Providence.....	\$92,476
Sisters of Charity.....	5,913
	<hr/> 98,389

AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS.

Rev L. O. Tremblay for Ste Anne's.....	\$2,256
Rev L. Casaubon for L'Assomption.....	2,438
Rev C. P. Choquette, experimental agricultural station.....	1,052
	<hr/> \$5,741

EDUCATION.

L'AssomptionCollege.....	1,404
St Laurent.....do	407
Joliette.....do	652
Ste Anne.....do	1,529
Levis.....do	1,138
Ste Marie (the Jesuits) do	1,462
Nicolet.....do	1,172
Rimouski.....do	1,974
Rouville.....do	650
St Hyacinthe.....do	650
Sherbrooke.....do	1,705
Ste Therese.....do	1,567
Three Rivers.....do	1,750
Rigaud	1,225
Vercheres.....do	800
	<hr/> 18,085
Other grants to Superior Education, including 188 convents.....	41,489
(The teachers in these institutions number 2,974, of whom 2,398 are in religious orders.)	
Grants to Catholic common schools, among whose teachers are 92 men and 247 women in religious orders..	124,000
Sisters of Providence, deaf, dumb, and blind schools.....	16,000
Rev R. A. B. Verreau, Normal School, Montreal.....	12,733
Rev T. G. Rouleau, Normal school, Quebec.....	14,400
	<hr/> 28,133

COLONIZATION, ETC.

Grants to Colonization Societies.....	16,000
Grant to Bishop Guay for mission to Indians	500
Brought forward from page 115.....	28,900
	<hr/> \$507,571

In the foregoing list such items as those for repatriation and for night schools are not included, nor is the loss to the province on the loan of \$50,000 to the Sisters of Providence and of \$10,000 to the Trappists. The payments under the Jesuit Estates act, which were made during the year, amounting to \$400,000, and \$3,500 to Father Labelle for salary and travelling expenses as deputy minister of agriculture, are also excluded, because exceptional. The schedule is a fair statement of the sums paid yearly out of the public funds to those "asylums, refuges, and hospitals and institutions of public instruction" which Mr Mercier asserts "are founded and maintained" by "the generosity of the clergy."

THE CHARGES OF FALSEHOOD.

Mr Mercier repeatedly gives me the lie. To take up each accusation would be tedious, but to show, with what slight reason he so often imputes falsehood to me I refer to a single instance:

"At the rebellion of 1837 (says Mr Sellar) the habitants were stimulated to take part in it, because one of the reforms promised was the abolition of tithes." This falsehood is found in no other serious work than in the report of Lord Durham. The gentleman of the Gleaner would be much troubled if he were called upon to prove this false assertion.—Mr Mercier, page 65.

Turning to the "Report of the State Trials," an official document, this is the testimony it gives:

They (the rebels) said that the lods et ventes and the rents were to be abolished, also the tithes.—P. 318, vol. I.

In reply to my enquiries, the rebels said that they intended to abolish the lods et ventes, make the country free, do away with the rents, and clip the gowns of the clergy.—P. 162, vol. II.

I understood from Gagnon that the object of the assemblage of armed men occupying Beauharnois was to suppress the priests' tithes, rents, and lods et ventes.—P. 159, vol. II.

Similar testimony could be multiplied, but it is unnecessary, for the declaration issued by the rebels from their headquarters at Napierville, which had been duly weighed and considered and was scattered broadcast as an official statement of their principles, contained the following paragraph, which is conclusive :

"All union between church and state is hereby declared to be dissolved."

THE PUBLIC PROTEST OF A TAXPAYER.

To the Hon. H. Mercier, Premier:

SIR,—You have publicly announced that the payment of the \$400,000 authorized by the Jesuit Estates' act will be made on the 5th November. It is to be apportioned as follows:

To the Jesuits.....	\$160,000
“ Laval University.....	140,000
“ the Roman Catholic missions on the Gulf.....	20,000
“ the Cardinal.....	10,000
“ The Archbishop.....	10,000
“ Bishop of Chicoutimi.....	10,000
“ “ “ Rimouski.....	10,000
“ “ “ Nicolet.....	10,000
“ “ “ Three Rivers.....	10,000
“ “ “ St Hyacinthe.....	10,000
“ “ “ Sherbrooke.....	10,000
	<hr/>
	\$400,000

This money, you have declared repeated'y, is to be paid as a righteous act of restitution for estates wrongfully taken by the British government from the Jesuits. If so, why do you not give the Jesuits the full amount voted by the legislature in compensation for their estates? When the people of the province see that the Jesuits are to get less than one-half of the sum voted, are they not justified in concluding that they have no right to any

part of it, and that your plea of restitution to the Jesuits is simply a cloak under which you hand over a large sum of public money to the clergy of your church?

The amount to be given, the act declares, "the lieutenant-governor in council is authorized to pay out of any PUBLIC MONEY at his disposal." That money was collected off the entire body of taxpayers, Catholic and Protestant, French and English, to carry on the business of the province. Its very name, "public money," indicates for what it was intended, yet you take it to make a present to the Jesuits, the cardinal and the bishops. That is a perversion of the purpose for which the money was contributed. You urge that a majority of the taxpayers being Roman Catholics you are justified in so applying the public money of the province. Did they pay their taxes as Roman Catholics or as citizens? Do you divide the receipts of the public chest into Catholic money and Protestant money, according to the religion of those who pay it? You know very well that creed has nothing to do with the levying and collecting of taxes, that the inhabitants of the province pay in their capacity as citizens, so that the funds entrusted to you for expenditure is neither Protestant nor Catholic money, but simply money to meet the expenses of the province. Therefore, each dollar you divert from its legitimate purpose to give to any church, is a breach of trust, a violation of the contract upon which our government is founded.

You have urged, however, that no practical injustice is done, seeing that, as compensation, sixty thousand dollars is to be given to the fund for Protestant superior education. Concurrent endowment of all creeds is no justification where there is no provision in the constitution for the endowment of any. But even the excuse of a system so immoral as concurrent endowment of all religions is futile in this instance, for you are not giving the \$60,000 to the minority of the province in their distinctive character as Protestants. Although for convenience the term "Protestant schools" has come into use, it is incorrect. The schools so designated are not Protestant, they are non-sectarian, the nearest approach to public and national schools in the province, consequently there is no parallel between the government voting \$60,000 towards their maintenance and giving \$400,000 to the Jesuits, to Roman Catholic missions, and to the hierarchy. The only possible equivalent to the \$400,000 would have been a proportionate grant to the Protestant churches. To pretend that a lump sum to schools that are practically secular is a set-off to bonuses to the Church of Rome imposes on nobody acquainted with the facts. You might as well have given the \$60,000 to make roads in the townships, and claimed the grant as balancing with the Protestants the \$400,000 to the Church of Rome.

It thus becomes clear that you propose on Tuesday to pay \$400,000 of public money against the spirit of the constitution and in defiance of all equity towards the Protestants. As members of

the commonwealth, it is the duty of Protestants to pay whatever is necessary to maintain it, and the government has the right of imposing and collecting taxes for that end. When the government goes beyond that, when it uses its power of taxation to subsidize any church, it travels beyond its sphere and does violence to the consciences of all who do not believe in the teaching of the church so favored. Religion is a matter between each individual and his God, and for the civil magistrate to step in and dictate what church I shall support is worse than tyranny—it is intolerance. Were you a resident of Ontario and the government of that province so far forgot its functions as to propose to divide \$400,000 of public money among the several Protestant denominations, what would you do? Would you quietly submit? I am sure you would not, that you would represent, with all the great energy you possess, that the main injury done did not lie in your having to pay the small amount of your contribution to the grant, but in the violence done to your conscience in compelling you to support churches in whose teaching you did not believe. Now, sir, put yourself in our place, and ask why you should deal with the Protestants of Quebec as you would not wish to be dealt by? Because we are a feeble minority, does that justify your using the power conferred upon you by your position, to tax us to enable the Jesuits to extend their influence or to enlarge the domain of the Church of Rome through the agency of its missions? Because you are six to one, because you

are so strong that you can do as you please, is it not cowardly to perpetrate such an outrage as to compel us to assist in maintaining a church against which our very name indicates that we and our fathers have borne solemn protest for centuries? Who are you that you should trample upon the consciences of your fellowmen and treat the Protestants of this province as existing in it on sufferance and to be treated as sponges, to be squeezed of their honest earnings for the enrichment of the church of the majority? Before such an instance of disregard for the feelings and the rights of those who differ from you, such an exhibition of intolerance in this advanced century and in this new world, I stand amazed, and cannot tell which is worst, your audacity in seeking political support by such means, your fanaticism, or your ignorance of those natural rights with which God has endowed all men. France has given to the world patterns of chivalry, knights tender in dealing with the weak and oppressed; there have been French Catholics, like Fenelon and Pascal, considerate of those who differed from them in creed, but you, sir, are the first French premier to treat the English-speaking minority as aliens, to disregard their feelings on the tenderest of points,—what they believe to be their duty to their God,—and to extort from them money to strengthen the hands of those who labor to expel them from the province.

We are a mixed community in this province, and there is only one way by which we can live in

amity, and that is, by respecting the religious feelings of one another. That can be done by the government confining itself to its proper duties and leaving everything pertaining to creed alone; extending to all the churches one and the same privilege, that of protection in the exercise of their legitimate functions. So long as the government favors one church, by conferring upon it exceptional privileges or by grants of public money, there will be no peace, and the province will be divided into hostile camps, into a favored and a discountenanced class, into a tyrannical majority and a wronged minority. Reverse that policy, let the government confine itself to its own domain and know neither Protestant nor Catholic in its administration of the affairs of the province, and the clouds that menace its future will roll away, there will be good-fellowship among the people and the prosperity of the province be assured. That is the path of safety and of peace, which I earnestly wish you would follow.

Should you, next week, pay the \$400,000, you will appropriate funds entrusted to your administration for the general service of the province, you will outrage the consciences of the Protestants, and you will begin a struggle whose consequences no one can foresee. In your speech at St Raymond you said "the storm has passed" and "the calm has already set in." You deceive yourself and those associated with you. When the sentiment of justice shall cease to dwell in men's bosoms, when they shall become indifferent in their loyalty to

Him who revealed His truth to them, then, and only then, will they submit to appropriation of their substance to maintain what their consciences condemn. The payment of the \$400,000 will be the signal of a struggle of which neither you nor I may live to see the end. If you are wise, if you are considerate of the interests of the province, you will pause before taking the irrevocable step of handing over that money.

This protest against the payment of the \$400,000 is penned by one, but it expresses the sentiments of thousands of the Protestant taxpayers of the province of Quebec.

ROBERT SELLAR.

Huntingdon, Q., Oct. 30, 1889.

A REMONSTRANCE.*

To Bishop Bourget:

REV. SIR,—It is one of the consequences of your high position that the voice of remonstrance seldom reaches you, and that you are encouraged to persist in what the judicious see to be an unfortunate course by the adulation of the sycophants who surround you. That you will scorn what one like myself may say is no excuse why I should not do my duty. You have done me an injury, and that in itself gives me a right to address you.

Since last May your clergy in this county have striven to ruin me—the crowning incident in this effort being that of last Sunday, when it was proclaimed, at service, with your authority, that whoever should even read the paper I publish, much less subscribe for it or contribute toward its volume of business in any way, would be visited with spiritual penalties. What cause have you for this outrageous act? Is the Gleaner an immoral paper—are your clergy only doing their duty as protectors of family virtue in ostracizing it? No one can say that I ever admitted even

*This letter is added to show that the views expressed in the preceding pages are not the result of political or personal feeling, they having been held by the writer before Mr Mercier was known in public life.

to its advertizing columns anything calculated to suggest evil, nor can it be alleged with truth that I have ever discussed any of the doctrines of the Church of Rome. As a secular paper it has confined itself to secular matters. What it has had to say touching your church has been solely on those points wherein it has come in contact with interests which affect the common weal. With the religious, the spiritual features of your church it has not meddled; with its secular or every-day policy, bearing as it does on the material and political welfare of the province, it has had much to say. This, and this alone, is the Gleaner's offence. You interfere in politics, you thrust your hand into the public chest, and then denounce as sacrilegious those who criticise you. By the act of your priests last Sunday you practically declare that the Press has no right to express its opinion on such subjects as the spending of the public money, the adoption of legislation, or the administration of justice, when the Church of Rome is one of the parties interested. The Press may comment where laymen alone are parties, but the appearance of a black robe on the public arena is to be the signal for its silence. Taxes contributed by all alike have been diverted by our Local House to the support of institutions of the Church of Rome, laws have been passed giving it unequal privileges, yet though a member of the community affected by such legislation and a subject of Queen Victoria's, my paper is proscribed by you for having expressed an opinion on

those and similar acts as they transpired. This is despotism; this is a denial of the right of free speech, and if you do not resort to any more summary means to stamp out the Gleaner it is because the progress of the age has left in the armory of your church no weapon more potent than its curse. What was said on Sunday sufficiently indicated the will.

You indignantly demand that the voice of the Press be silenced regarding your church. There is only one way by which you can attain your desire. Leave politics alone, seek not the public revenues, respect the supremacy of the State, confine yourselves to your religious vocation, and then, if the Press refers to you at all, it will be with respect and commendation. Assuredly under such circumstances the Gleaner would be the last paper in the Dominion to say aught regarding you. But so long as you do not do this, so long as you are the most influential element in our political life, you will be subject to comment. No system of priestly terrorism can secure silence. Even if every paper you have denounced were to be wiped out of existence, from your own ranks would spring champions of the rights of the people.

Mark you, I would not have complained had the Catholics of this District given up the paper of their own motion. If it had become obnoxious to them they would have done right to stop it. What I do protest against, is your stepping between it and those who took it and who were willing to continue to do so—threatening them with the

censure of the church if they refused to give it up or even read it. It would be affectation to treat your act with indifference. However it may be with city papers, which draw support from the Dominion at large, country papers, which, from their very nature, are of interest only to those in the neighborhood in which they are published, if they lose a portion of their local support cannot replace it from abroad. You will thus see that the force of your blow is not underrated, and yet you will learn in course of time that it has been powerless for coercion, which was what you aimed at.

Consider in what an invidious position you are placing your people. You dictate to them to what schools they shall send their children and what kind of education they shall receive; when an election draws nigh you issue your commands as to how they shall vote, and now you stoop so far as to prescribe what newspaper they shall read. How is it you have so little confidence in your laity, that you thus rob them of freedom of will in secular matters? Not content with being supreme over their consciences in the domain of Faith you seek also to dictate in matters affecting their daily lives, in which hitherto no such interference has been attempted. The old liberal Catholicism is to be extinguished and the talons of newly-fledged Ultramontaniam are to clutch everything, whether secular or religious.

Do you adopt such a policy because you are conscious that the course pursued by you and your

fellow-prelates in political and other public matters is of such a nature that it will not bear investigation? If your conduct is above reproach, why should you forbid your people to read any comments upon it? Does truth shrink from the light? Did ever Right eschew discussion? What inducement is it to those outside your pale to seek for entrance when you thus proclaim that the judgment and independence with which God has endowed all men should be laid under your feet, not merely in religious matters but also in those touching the ordinary affairs of life? Are you not men of like parts and passions as ourselves, are you different from the rest of the children of Adam, have you a single intellectual or moral faculty we have not? Why, then, thus domineer over and dictate to your fellowmen? If you are justified in this act of banning newspapers I cannot conceive of any limit to your interference with the doings of your laity.

In your act I recognize merely an incident in the gigantic design of the Hierarchy, of which you are so prominent a member, to make this province what the Papal States were five years ago—a preserve for the Church of Rome. Since the inauguration of Confederation it has been impossible to ignore the evidences of such a scheme. Not content with the immunities and privileges your church had—greater than those it enjoys in France or in any other European state—its right to collect by law tithes, giving it substantially every twenty-sixth farm in the province, and to impose

and similarly collect assessments to rear churches, you have laid your hands on the public chest of the province, and the funds, contributed by men of all faiths and designed for general purposes, are, every session, being more and more diverted to add to the wealth of your already enormously wealthy church. For it, in every sphere, you have claimed precedence; from the pulpit of your own cathedral we have heard it proclaimed that the State is only second,* and in our courts you have repeatedly questioned the jurisdiction of the law where your church is defendant and not plaintiff. The English-speaking population are treated as intruders, and with the public funds you are now endeavoring to supplant them by repatriated Catholics, and to found colonies and parishes in the heart of our townships. You exhaust your skill in devices to keep your people apart from us. You invoke the terrors of your church to prevent their children learning the rudiments of education at the same schools as ours, and so growing up in life together, as neighbors should. Your clergy, in instances I could give you, have recommended non-intercourse as far as practicable, you forbid them

*The allusion is to the sermon preached in Notre Dame church, Montreal, on the 2nd Nov., 1872, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Bishop Bourget's ordination, and when he was, of course, present, with a large concourse of priests and laity, none of whom publicly dissented from the views expressed. The preacher laid down the proposition "The State is subordinate to the Church, and in case of a conflict between them, the Church has to decide, the State to submit." The sermon was merely an amplification of this assertion, with praise of the Bishop for having acted upon it.

reading any newspaper which does not bear your stamp, you have even gone so far as to provide that your insane and criminals shall not come in contact with ours. You have striven, and too successfully, to identify creed with nationality, and thus placed the greatest obstacle to their co-operating with us in political action. We have all to live together, we all owe allegiance to the same sovereign, we have all the same country's interests to promote and defend, and yet you and your brother prelates, aided largely by public funds contributed by the class you thus condemn, are building up a wall of partition between the people of the two faiths and the two languages, and providing for the future feuds of the bitterest kind.

For you need not think you will succeed. You have met with little resistance so far. Those who should have withstood you have worked with you. But beware of the coming years. Acquainted with your church only in countries like Great Britain, where it shows its best side, or remembering the good-feeling which has existed in this province until of late, it has taken time for the English-speaking people to learn that it has assumed a new phase, and that the change in our political connection with the sister-provinces has incited it to greater assumptions. But they are fast realizing the situation and adapting themselves to meet the dangers that menace them, and you will soon discover there is a phalanx who will never surrender to your claims, and who will see to it that here British rights are maintained inviolable by

placing civil and religious liberty on a broad and sure foundation.

Were it not that I know I would only expose myself to mockery, I would beseech you to pause and retrace your steps. Civil strife is a terrible thing, yet you are sowing the seeds of an irrepressible conflict. Although I know it is vain to expect the exponents of Vaticanism to abate one jot, it is proper to point out the consequences. The responsibility for whatever may happen in the future falls upon you, not upon us. The provocation has come from you.

You have done your worst to me. By your prohibition of last Sunday you have taken away from me the last inducement to forbearance, and I have therefore nothing more to expect or to fear. In whatever sphere I may be in I will not forego my resistance to the aggression of your church on the rights of the people of this province, and this I will do until my head lies as low as that of my brother-printer,* whom, though Death has thrown around him its sanctity, you still pursue with that remorseless vengeance you reserve for those who dare to think for themselves.

ROBERT SELLAR

Huntingdon, Q., Oct. 15, 1875.

* Guibord.